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[JAMES HOLMES, TOOK'S COURT.]

REVIEWS

The Duchesse de la Vallière: a Play. By the Author of 'Eugene Aram,' &c. Saunders & Oiley.

We are not of those, it is well perhaps again to acknowledge, who would set up the corpse of Tragedy in a state bed, and call that a revival. Crown her, enthrone her, fill her dull cold ear with compliments, raise anthems in honour of her cadaverous beauty—all is a miserable mockery that brings the gorge into the mouth of a spectator; every chapter you put round her brow withers at its chill; robe after robe, however splendid, turns to a pall; your praises die into the hollow echoes of a tomb, your proudest hymns of triumph into a dead march. Once more we affirm it is a miserable mockery—take away the bolster and the body falls! To the grave with her again—do her homage there. Worship as many little images of her as you please, but always recollect they are waxen apologies for the true presence. At all events, if the resuscitation of the mighty Creature is to be endeavoured, let us beg those concerned about the work to bethink them that puffing each other does not blow the breath of life into her nostrils; and that it will merit no better name than literary galvanism if they restore her to gibbering speech and fitful action, unless they can give her back at the same time a permanent soul. Matter of hope or despair, as the revival of the Drama may be, this admonition probably comes nothing amiss.

In expressing ourselves as above, we do not fear to put out the blaze of dramatic ambition, which makes such a crackle among us at present, or to paralyze the energies of genius, whose self-confidence is often a spur to exertion, and a source of success: encouraging voices are too many as well as too loud against us; we might as well seek to cry down the Park and Tower guns of a birthday, or all the joy-bells of London after a royal recovery. Apprehension, we think, should be on the other side: that our dramatists, finding their doorways planted with laurel, should sit down under them and search no farther. If they be in the right road, a forest of palms will obstruct them—if in the wrong, set them still more astray. For our own parts, we, indeed, as much expect the restoration of the Great Drama as King Arthur back from Avalon; but what is that, when dramatists and critics of the drama are as sanguine as so many Welshmen about the return of their idol? We may allege, as a still better excuse for promulgating our scepticism, that every false impetus given to genius or power, is really an impediment to its progress in the true line. Critics have more than one point of resemblance to finger-posts; if they show the wrong path, it were much more to the public advantage that their directions were ruddled out. Is drama the true line? Let us have some good ground for thinking so, before we click our poets to run headlong upon it. It would be a sad consummation, if the flight of our swans were to turn out but a wild-goose chase.

We stated, in our notice of 'Ion,'^t our reasons for disbelieving that the present age is dramatic; a position in which all the storms hitherto raised against us have only served to root us the deeper.

^t No. 448.

Unless arguments of heavier calibre be brought to shake us, we must stand our old ground like a pyramid, immovable, everlasting. Our opinion was built, not upon the failure of modern dramatic experiments, though we might perhaps fairly regard this as a running illustration, but upon *a priori* independent principles, the conclusion from which we think demonstrative, although quite willing to allow its illegitimacy—when proved. Referring to it as the basis of our present and future criticisms, we shall only add here, that, such is our love for the Drama, we had rather a million-fold enjoy six good plays than our said opinion. If a body of scenic literature, deserving to be so called, should even to this small extent appear, we are ready to shut up oracle at once, and become joyful penitents for our scepticism. However, it will not suffice that the body of scenic literature is pronounced such by the playwrights themselves, or their *sub rosa* friends; nor that common-place extracts put into italics or tombstone capitals, are set before the eyes of the public to dazzle them like paintings on gold; nor that dramatic spirit can be instanced here and there, like amaranth in a kitchen-garden, which, nevertheless, makes it no Paradise. Dramatic spirit! why yes; Homer's Iliad is full of dramatic spirit,—does this make it a drama? Chevy Chase is as dramatic a ballad as Shakespeare could have written,—does this make the hedge-poet a dramatist? Truly, it displays a most white-minded state of acquaintanceship with the subject, to assert, that because Scott's novels contain dramatic spirit, therefore Scott had genius for drama. Where is the newspaper which does not display law-giving spirit? Yet how many newspaper editors could turn out practical Lycurguses, and found solid systems of legislation? It will be answered: Scott had a genius for drama, but chose to restrain it. We doubt if any man, not altogether dissolved in a jelly of indolence, ever kept his genius life-long under a bushel; but a less theoretical reply is, look at 'Halidon Hill'! Or must this, too, pass for a drama? We dare say: with those whose standard is but half-staff high, and who, whenever they have no distinct idea of a work's real excellence, declare it, in the straits of their criticism, very *dramatic*. Every pet work is dramatic now; the best proof that little of the quality can be abroad, else we should not hear it so often attributed as the highest compliment. But the critical philosophy is short-sighted indeed, which cannot see that a spirit of almost any denomination whatever may be found in any age. Epic genius flashes out through Shakespearean times as plain as lightnings in a thunder-storm, yet we do not call those times epic, but dramatic. Under the Stuart and succeeding reigns, dramatic spirit, though of a feeble kind, was rarer than at present: we have no tragedy which is not as milk-and-water to elixir vita, in comparison with 'Venice Preserved' or 'The Revenge,' however stilted and rhetorical; yet we designate those ages of poetry Lyric, or Satiric, not Dramatic. These very plain truths would be quite superfluous, if those who talk a great deal on the subject of the Drama would think a little.

We are by no means blind to the merits of our living dramatists. There is much admirable poetry in 'Ion,' sombre power about the 'Plays

on the Passions,' adaptation of home feelings to public effect in 'Virginius,' &c.: Landor has a fine bolting strength of imagination, which melts at times into exquisite tenderness; Barry Cornwall possesses genuine tragic pathos, and without Sheridan Knowles's scenic adroitness or Landor's vigour, would, we think, pitch his spear higher than any dramatist of the day, simply from having a truer idea of his sublime function. This author has written but one play, being gifted, perhaps, with a little of the unhappy knowledge to which his more blissful brother-poets are impenetrable—that Tragedy is no more to be drawn down from heaven again than Astræa.

Mr. Bulwer comes now before us as a candidate for the scenic crown: we are surprised he has not done so long before,—that very simple thing, drama, which nevertheless baffled the mighty genius of Milton, being thought, by our authors in the shell, a good kind of chirrup to come out with—a nice easy flit to try their wings in! No young gentleman, of the smallest talent or pretension, can sit down in quiet until he has written his tragedy; why Mr. Bulwer should have been so late, we cannot tell. He is, beyond doubt, one of our chief notables in literature: no one can get up a spirited novel, or hit off a brilliant political tract, more ably. But we doubt if these very faculties do not rather unfit him for a tragedist: they give his pages too much the character of touch-paper, that sparkles and spits fire from one end to the other, without splendid blaze or striking explosion. They are such as would constitute agreeable squibbing in every form, political or not; and make what is called a *crack* author of any one endowed with them; but however they might enable Mr. Bulwer to succeed in comedy, we fear they bespeak a grade of mind the whole height of Delphi's steep beneath the loftier walk of the drama. To us, he appears deficient altogether in that cleaving power of eloquence which would reach the core of his subject at once—that power of massing the passions upon each single point, until their force becomes irresistible; as well as in the gentle energies with which suppressed affection, patient anguish, simplicity not common-place, are raised to the tragic value of those higher passions, and made to take our hearts by sap instead of storm. Mr. Bulwer seems not to have an idea that tragedy is aught more sublime than a sentimental love story, or demands a weightier outlay of mind than so many dialogues from a talking novel. Even the subject he has fixed on for his play indicates, we think, a low-thoughted estimation of the drama. Not that the subject is too domestic or disreputable; we are content enough, so far as their subject, with George Barnwell, and Jane Shore; but however well the maudlin amiability of poor La Vallière, and the tinsel character of Louis's court, may serve for a novel, a nobler theme, we submit, should have been chosen to harmonize with the great nature of the drama. Besides, the powers of the dramatist will most often sink to the level of his subject: we can indeed conceive Shakespeare to have elevated that of La Vallière into drama, though we cannot conceive him to have chosen it.

But, after all, Mr. Bulwer was perhaps right in taking such a subject, and we must applaud rather than blame him for so doing: a greater one would

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have crushed his faculties, not expanded them; it is only the eagle that perches upon Jove's footstool. We find more legitimate fault with his treatment of the subject, throughout the whole process of which we can scarce detect one elementary particle of dramatic power developing or threatening to develope itself. He "asks no favour" of the public; in the name of that public we will do him the highest,—counsel him never to attempt another play of the serious kind—it would be the death of his reputation, and no new life to tragedy. His characters, even those recommended with a slight flourish in his prologue—Lauzun and La Vallière, are as feebly sketched as shadows of clouds upon rippling water; they have neither depth, nor decided outline, nor enduringness. All the real ones are far better drawn in the memoirs, or gossipping histories of France, and have far more of "dramatic spirit" in those works than in Mr. Bulwer's drama. Nay, he himself, in his own preface, pourtrays such as he speaks of there with an acumen and discernment to which his stage personifications have no claim whatever; this is a further proof that powers, dramatic enough for common prose purposes, may become totally inadequate to the prodigious wear and want of the drama. Doubtless the portraiture upon our author's mental canvas were striking and determinate enough; and we conclude that, seeing only these, while looking at his faint transcripts of them on paper, he came to a complaisant opinion of the latter. We do not know an authorial delusion more frequent and fatal than this—confounding what is in the mind with what is in the manuscript—nor any talent more requisite than that which enables a writer to tell when he has fixed the fugitive spirit in words, when or how far he has suffered it to evaporate. A lack of this talent, we apprehend, must have led our author to suppose he had delineated the magnificent phrase-maker, the splendid counterfeit of great-mindedness, Louis Quatorze, by means of a little common-place *politesse*, and country-justice solemnity;—the refined intriguer, Lauzun, by making him the flimsy artificer of fraud that any court-spider could have woven; and the *spirituelle* demirep, Montespan, by giving her a few speeches to utter, as insipid as La Vallière herself doles forth when most sentimental. We are not much more enamoured with the ideal character of Bragelone: it becomes original only by outraging nature. Such a character may be possible, but dramatists should know that it is the *probable*, not the *possible*, which constitutes the natural. A rejected lover may, if his passion have been sublimated by its own ardour from all earthly dregs, keep watch and ward over his scornful lady while she is undefiled,—may even seek to warn her from the slide into pollution: it would however, we conceive, be by a more delicate hint than calling her "harlot" to her face (p. 46), and sustaining a categorical argument with her about the chances of seduction. Devotioness the most enthusiastic would, we are sure, turn to disgust and indignation, if his *protégée*, after once submitting to be saved, though with extreme reluctance, embraced concubinage next moment at the foot of the cross, and clung to that till driven to this again by satiety not her own, and jealousy which she called religion. What was the real case? Bragelone slew himself in despair: here is truth of history and truth of nature. The fictitious Bragelone becomes monk, to preach back his slippery mistress a second time into the Magdalen asylum: here is falsification of both.

We have often testified to our author's high talents as a novelist and political writer: it would give us much satisfaction were we able to enlist him in our skeleton company of dramatists,

did he reach within half a head of the standard height. Cockades are as abundant with us as cat-o'-nine-tails; and we declare, on the honour of dramatic drill-serjeants, we should bestow the former with yet more good-will than the latter, upon deserving subjects. But Mr. Bulwer is guiltless of all such merit as we look for: we can find him indictable for dramatic sorcery on no count or plea whatever. It might have been expected that the language of his play would compensate for the poverty of its plot, and the puny development of its characters; that it, at least, would have afforded good soundings in which to anchor our hopes of a future dramatist. No such thing: the language has no particular cast or character, but is just what dealers in poetry talk on the common 'Change and Cheapside of Parnassus. On some occasions it may be what newspaper critics would call "powerful"; for example, where politics inspire it: to us, it appears little above what might be written by a brave schoolboy, who had caught the ordinary itch of blank verse and patriotism. We shall quote one of the best passages, and fervently wish the reader may find more delight from it than we did:—

Louis. I can no more hold parley with impatience, But long to learn how Lauzun's courtship prosers. She is not here. At prayers, perhaps. The Duchess Hath grown devout. A friar!—Save you, father! *Bragelone.* I thank thee, son. *Louis.* He knows me not. Well, Monk, Are you her Grace's almoner? *Brag.* Sire, no! *Louis.* So short, yet know us? *Brag.* Sire, I do. You are The man—
Louis. How, priest! the man! *Brag.* The word offends you? *The King,* who raised a maiden to a Duchess. That maiden's father was a gallant subject: Kingly reward!—you made his daughter Duchess. That maiden's mother was a stainless matron: Her heart you broke, though mother to a Duchess! That maiden was affianced from her youth To one who served you well—nay, saved your life: His life you robbed of all that gave life value; And yet—you made his fair betrothed a Duchess. You are that King. The world proclaims you "Great;" A million warriors bled to buy your laurels; A million peasants starved to build Versailles: Your people famish; but your court is splendid! Priests from their pulpits bless your glorious reign; Poets have sung thee greater than Augustus; And painters placed you on immortal canvass, Lim'd as the Jove whose thunders awe the world: But to the humble minister of God, You are the King who has betrayed his trust— Beggar'd a nation, but to bloat a court, Seen in men's lives the pastime to ambition, Looked out on virtue as the toy for vice; And, for the first time, from a subject's lips, Now learns the name he leaves to Time and God!

Louis. Add to the head-roll of that King's offences, That, when a foul-mouthed Monk assumed the rebel, The Monster-King forgave him. Hast thou done?

Brag. Your changing hue belies your royal mien;

In the high monarch veils the trembling man!

Louis. Well, you are privileged! It ne'er was said

The Fourteenth Louis, in his proudest hour, Bow'd not his sceptre to the Church's crozier.

Brag. Alas! the Church. 'Tis true, this garb of serge

Dares speech that daunts the ermine, and walks free

Where stout hearts tremble in the triple mail.

But wherefore?—Lies the virtue in the robe?

Which the moth eats? or in these senseless beads?

Or in the name of Priest? The Pharisees

Had priests that gave their Saviour to the cross!

No! we have high immunity and sanction.

That Truth may teach humanity to Power.

Glide through the dungeon, pierce the armed throng,

Awaken Luxury on her Sybarite couch,

And, starting souls that slumber on a throne,

Woe kings before that priest of priests—THE CONSCIENCE.

Louis (aside). An awful man!—unlike the reverend crew

Who praise my royal virtues in the pulpit,

And—ask for bishops when church is over!

Brag. This makes us sacred. The profane are they

Honouring the herald white they scorn the mission.

The king who serves the church, yet clings to mammon,

Who fears the pastor, but forgoes the flock;

Who bows before the monitor, and yet—

Will ne'er forgive the sin, mis'ry sinks when age

Pales the lust and deadens the temptation

To the priest-ridden, not repentant, dotard,—

For pious hopes halp superstitious terrors.

And seek some sleek Iscarit of the church

To sell salvation for the thirty pieces!

Louis (aside). He speaks as one inspired!

Brag. Awake!—awake!

Great though thou art, awake thee from the dream

That earth was made for kings—mankind for slaughter—

Woman for lust—the People for the Palace!

Dark warnings have gone forth; along the air Lingers the crash of the first Charles's throne! Behold the young, the fair, the haughty king! The kneeling courtiers, and the flattering priests; Lo! where the palace rose, behold the scaffold— The crowd—the axe—the headsman—and the Victim! Lord of the silver lilies, canst thou tell If the same fate await not thy descendant!

If some meek son of thine imperial line

May make no brother to thy headless spectre!

And when the sage who addens o'er the end

Tracks back the causes, tremble, lest he find

The seeds, thy wars, thy pomp, and thy profusion

Sowed in a heartless court and breadless people,

And the long glare of thy funeral glories

Light unbom monarchs to a ghastly grave!

Beware, proud King! The Present cries aloud,

A prophet to the Future. Wake!—beware!

[Exit Bragelone.]

Louis. Gone! Most ill-omened voice and fearful shape!

Scarce seemed it of the earth; a thing that breathed

But to fulfil some dark and dire best

To appal us, and to vanish.—The quick blood

Halts in my veins. Oh! never till this hour

Heard I the voice that awed the soul of Louis,

Or met one brow that did not quail before

My kingly gaze! and this unmitred monk!

I'm glad that none were by.—It was a dream;

So let it memory like a dream depart.

I am no tyrant—nay, I love my people.

My wars were made but for the fame of France!

My pomp! why, tush!—what King can play the hermit!

My conscience smites me not; but last eve

I did confess, and was absolved!—A bigot!

And half, methinks, a heretic! I wish

The Jesuits had the probing of his doctrines.

Well, well, 'tis o'er!—What ho, there!

[Enter Gentleman of the Chamber.]

Wine! Apprise

Once more the Duchess of our presence.—Stay!

Yon monk, what doth he here?

Gentleman.

Never saw him till this day.

I know not, Sire,

Louis. Strange!—Wine!

[Exit Gentleman.]

This language evidently has nothing characteristic of drama, more than being clipt into separate passages, and given to separate speakers; it is after the commonest receipt for poetical declamation: a select piece of parliamentary eloquence about the "prerogatives of the crown," and the "rights of the people," if put into blank verse, would be just as suitable to the stage. Critical equity, however, obliges us to add, that our present author's language is no more undramatic than most contemporaneous playwrights think proper to use. A stage-poet, now-a-days, seems to have little idea that there can be anything special in his mission: he has only to stand up forsooth, and utter the contents of his head-spring straightforward like a spout! What else should he do, unsophisticated child of nature, but speak what he feels in his simple mother-tongue, just as it came to him from his nurse? We will tell him: no unsophisticated child of nature ever yet became a great poet, without becoming a pupil of art likewise. If he wish to write drama, he must harmonize his language in a peculiar key, which is that of drama, and nothing besides. Shakespeare himself did so—the genius of the time was his instructor, the modulator of his spirit and his style. Must a modern dramatist, then, copy what Mr. Bulwer entitles the "quaintness" of Shakespeare? No; but his varied, familiar, personal style, full of transitions, breaks, fluctuations—eloquent, not declamatory—energetic, not brawling—beyond all things alive with individuality. It will be said, this is not the genius of our language at present, which rather tends to the characterless and equable: we have a very simple reply—then the genius of our present language is not dramatic. What else have we affirmed from the first?

Mr. Bulwer's language seems to us as deficient in imagination and passion as in character. Surely those eternal love-notes, "my own Louise!"—"my mother!" are in a very lack-laundered taste! and what better than a specimen of melo-dramatic sentimentality is the following?

Madame de la Vallière.
Cheer thee, my Louise!
And let us now within; the dew is falling.—

And I forgot
Pardon!—w—
(*St.*)

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Mademoiselle de la Vallière.
And I forgot how ill thy frame may bear them.
Pardon!—within, within!

(*Stopping short, and gazing fondly on Madame de la Vallière.*)

Your hand, dear mother! [Exeunt.]

The incident of Capapé Bragelone bespeaking a woodbine for his "mother's old apartment," because "his own Louise" has such a love for it, struck us as in a like valetudinarian state of the fancy. Our author is not much less Della Cruscan when he thinks fit to enamel his dialogue with flowers. Thus, we are told that a fair one—

Shook blushes (sweetest rose-leaves!) from her beauty.

Here we learn that *blushes* are a kind of *rose-leaves*; and the same desperate resolution to say something exquisite, produces the addled description of certain—

Darkly-dreaming eyes

That melt in their own light!

In another place we are treated of the delectable image of *Hope* gone to roost—an idea that a romancing hen-wife might be proud to hatch:

Fluttering hope,

That voiced the world with song, has gone to roost!

It is such ineptitudes as the above which bring down the rate of poetry, and make it be considered as a link between the two extremes of nonsense—silliness and madness.

How high, let us ask, does Mr. Bulwer set the dignity of the drama, when he makes Louis-le-Grand talk to La Vallière at the cross, as he might a colonel of the Guards to *Fanny Softly*, holding on by her father's door-post—"Not trust me, dearest?" This is sceptered Tragedy! this is the Great Drama pitching her voice, trumpet-high, to proclaim her resurrection!

Mr. Bulwer's play also abounds with a mark of debility which we must signalize for the sake of a general remark: we allude to impotent words, given factitious force by dint of italics:—Feebleness may be always known by this crutch. True, the old writers italicize even more than the moderns; but with this material difference, that they point attention to words because their great significance deserved it,—we, because their deficiency requires it. *Thee, thine, me, my*, beg to be considered very impressive, and are pensioners on the reader's bounty for all the value he pleases to accord them. Mr. Bulwer has indeed universal custom to authorize his practice, and we cannot fairly deny to him alone the common support of our era's weakness.

In conclusion, we are not disappointed with the present drama; neither from the age nor the author did we expect better. He is a star calculated to shine in quite a different constellation from Shakespeare's. Fresh and fresh novels, like flowers to Covent Garden, are the best commodities he can bring to the popular market; and they promise to be always acceptable, for they are the productions most native to the soil of his mind, which he had much better permit to lie fallow than crop with what draws so exhaustively upon the deepest, richest mould, as the drama. Were his 'Oliver Cromwell, a Tragedy,' not in the press, we should, if possible, beg off the fame of our noble Usurper. To handle such a stalwart character would break the wrists of any but a giant dramatist. We cannot but fear that we shall have our stout-hearted Rebel represented to us again as a great girl in a leather doublet, piping repentance and moralities, or a Ruggantino in trunk-hose, blistering his tongue with fiery bravadoes. We say not this disparagingly of Mr. Bulwer in particular, but would ask, is there pith enough in any modern playwright to wrestle with, and reduce to his proper shape, such a Proteus? Stubborn and pliant, enthusiast and hypocrite, straightforward and circumventive, vulgar and high-minded, exalting his country and treading

her under his foot, inexorable and clement, confused and clear-headed, an ascetic, a buffoon, absurd politician, preposterous statesman, yet foiling the best wits of Europe, and making those of England his mock! Character—indomitable force of character—was the reconciler of all these discordances, the iron bond that gave them unity of direction, till a whole people fell prostrate beneath his single strength. Let us see what the dramatic genius of the day can do in depicting this compound individual—this corporation of many characters—the immortal Lord-Protector of England. We suspect he will have the same fortune as Alfred the Great, who has been drawn a thousand times, and may be drawn a thousand times more, yet never can be pourtrayed once!

An Investigation of the Constitutions of Free Nations—[Etudes sur les Constitutions des Peuples libres]. By J. C. L. Simonde de Sismondi.

[Second Notice.]

To our expressed opinion of M. Sismondi's work, we were led reluctantly, in despite of our prejudices in favour of the author; but having discharged our duty, we have now only to show that the defect in the scope and general tendency of the whole is redeemed by the richness and value of its details. It is one of those works which, without carrying the reader to the author's conclusions, is perpetually setting things in new points of view, suggesting forgotten or neglected truths, and inviting to thought, caution, and inquiry. There is, in particular, dispersed through its pages, much curious information, and sagacious remarks on the practical working of existing institutions. Thus, for example, without adopting all the opinions, we may quote the following passages from the author's observations on party violence of language, as being eminently applicable to our own domestic position. After referring to the growing cynicism of the press, and of popular assemblies in this respect, he observes:

All tumult in a popular assembly, all violence of language, all provocation to the angry passions, are not only offences against the national dignity, but attacks on liberty, and on the sovereignty of reason, which is the highest prerogative of a free people. In France, these outrages destroy the spirit of representation, and scarcely leave alive its forms. It discredits the assembly which should possess all a nation's respect. How, in fact, can the public fail to place such an assembly below the level of the lowest agents of an executive, that always preserves its calm—when that assembly is found to always be impatient and choleric, when it is not inattentive; and when, in place of conciliating opposite interests, it excites defiance and provokes derision? In England the parliament had long preserved the tone and dignity of its debate; but the contagion of the journals is beginning to make itself felt within the walls of the Houses. The noisy and quarrelsome habits of the Irish members have exercised also a bad influence; and the affairs of the nation have suffered by the change. In America this roughness is carried even to an affection, under the notion that it is a token of equality. The fortunes of liberty, the final triumph of the universal popular cause is deeply compromised by this fashion, which is gaining ground in legislative assemblies, through the applause bestowed on those who excel in the expression of passion and of sarcasm. Wisdom and truth are abandoned for an oratorical triumph, which, after all, is but the success of a day. It is high time that England should return to its ancient parliamentary habits, to its ancient sentiment of propriety; and that all other free states should learn from England, that representative forms lose their utility and fall into contempt, if not elevated by the gravity, urbanity, and calm of the speakers.

There can be no doubt that the evil, here denounced, is one of deep and increasing import; that violence and personality are materially endangering the freedom and the utility of debate,

and preparing the public mind for overt acts of a like nature. But the mischief is not confined to Irish members, or popular delegates of any part of the empire. It is not the result of the Reform Bill's opening the representation to another class; for it pervades the House of Peers no less than the House of Commons, where indeed it is the more remarkable for the contrast it exhibits with the ordinary quiet and tranquil manners of their lordships. The evil is not in the house, nor in the journals, nor in any one class of society. It pervades the mass; it is to be found in the highest as well as the lowest; and it flows from the vastness of the personal interests brought into discussion. † It is no longer a question merely of place and power, between Whig and Tory, but a stand-up fight between principle and principle, involving pecuniary and personal sacrifices, and rousing all the malignant pas-

Sismondi has some good remarks, coupled however with a slight error as to facts, on the necessity of separating legislation from the business of constructing laws. It is for the national representatives to declare their will, and for an expert state-servant to embody that will, in the forms which shall make it intelligible and efficacious. For this mechanical labour, a popular assembly is the least fit organ; and through its inefficiency, the British nation suffers, both in time and vexation, inconceivable mischief, from the prevalent imperfection of acts of parliament. The abuse is crying, and demands instant relief; but we shall take an early opportunity of recurring to this subject, and of considering it more fully.

Sismondi has also a long and curious discussion concerning elective monarchy, chiefly remarkable for comparative enumeration of the results as developed in history, and those of the hereditary system. The author inclines to the former; contrary, as it seems to us, to general opinion and to the balance of the facts. The passage however merits consideration, and will repay the trouble of perusal. Mons. Sismondi thus sums up his argument against hereditary succession:—

The most that can be expected from this system is, that the king born to the throne shall equal any one man chosen by lot from the mass. Doubtless he will have in his favour the education of royal preceptors, who will give him the polish, the manners, and the superficial acquirements of "the gentleman"; but against him, he will have the education of courtiers and the females of his court, who have no shorter cut to favouritism than by flattering the vices of the monarch. He will have against him the intoxication of power and the habit of beholding all things yield to his will. An enumeration of the monarchs, either madmen or imbeciles, that Europe has witnessed in the last hundred years, proves, but too plainly, that the chances of hereditary succession are more unfavourable to royalty, than those of a chance selection.

In considering the aristocracy of riches, the author has entered upon a tirade against its cold calculations, which we should not have expected from him. To explain his ideas on the subject, he dramatizes the circumstance; and makes the agent of a manufacturing capitalist say to his employer, "Your manufacture of glass or porcelain has no vent, and you may employ your furnaces more advantageously in producing certain chemical articles. With a million of money, you may supply all France.—Who provides these articles at present? (is the reply)—Such and such houses, in such and such provinces.—Will they not continue their industry? No, you can undersell them.—What will they do, then? They must yield and be ruined.—What will become

* The guilty parties in the libels of the press, are less the proprietors of journals, than the purchasers, who demand the articles.

of their workmen? They must be ruined too.—Begin the work: you shall have the million."

Upon this datum the author erects a furious diatribe against an aristocracy of riches, as if the success and prosperity of the entire nation, and the special benefit of the consumers, (that is, of everybody in turn,) did not arise out of this very heartless competition: and as if the adoption of any other principle would not banish commerce to other lands, where heads were at once stronger and cooler. It is really astonishing that a political economist should fall into such a mistake.

We shall now quote the author's observations on Switzerland, which, coming from him, are really of importance, and deserve consideration and respect:—

In the present day, there are madmen who would unite Switzerland under one government, to make it strong; that is, they would suppress all its vital institutions, all that is endeared by long-cherished recollections to the people, and which exerts a power over the affections of the citizen in favour of his ancient country. These imprudent innovators do not perceive that the division of Switzerland into sovereign Cantons, is the true principle and bond of its unity; because this division removes from the diet almost all those questions which would stir up the different localities against the central authority. Switzerland is an assemblage of populations, separated by mountains, and accustomed also to separate their interests,—of populations preserving a diversity of language, manners, laws, and habits. Each of them is therefore accustomed to consider itself as absolutely independent of the rest, and prepared to break up even the canton itself, as Bâle and Schwitz were upon the point of doing. If the radicals should carry the day, and name a constituent assembly, and if that assembly should endeavour to introduce uniformity of civil, religious, and commercial laws, of taxes, and of military and commercial arrangements, on the next day Switzerland would cease to be. On any such an attempt, twenty-one of the twenty-two Cantons would be wounded in their habits, their opinions, and their dearest affections. Each would be jealous and offended, because a neighbour's system had prevailed over its own; and each would fly to arms to repel what it would call tyranny and the yoke of the stronger. If, in such a contest, the central government triumphed, it would be forced upon despotism, in its resistance to local authorities; if it failed, it could not be replaced by any other.

The following is a graphic picture of the political combination which has resulted from the French Revolution of 1830:—

A nation has not a king, because it has proclaimed one—because, in some assembly, it has decreed the throne to some one person. A king is the representative and hereditary defender of certain interests, affections, and prejudices—a chief whose title to power is, according to the royalists, indisputable and inalienable. According to them, a revolutionary king is an usurper. They deny that the contract with the preceding government could be broken—they deny the right of the assembly to appoint a new king, or that the appointee could accept the office without a crime. But these enemies of the new power, these men who glory in their opposition to it, are precisely those who ought to be the supporters of the throne. They are the defenders of ancient laws, ancient habits, of the traditions of power, and of hereditary possessions—they are the born defenders of authority against popular pretension. Placed in eminent station, their example would be followed by those even who do not share their opinions; it is they who can make opposition a fashion, and whose sedition cannot be punished without exciting an universal cry of tyranny. Here, then, is a first difficulty—the natural defenders of the throne are the greatest enemies of the new king.

But can this new king rely upon those who have conferred upon him the crown? These last are still full of the resentments which they nourished against the deposed monarch—are accustomed to combat royalty, to distrust its measures, to fear and to restrict its prerogatives. Each day they will compare what is done by the object of their choice with the

conduct of his predecessor, and will see a counter-revolution in each return to the old habits of royalty. Whenever their own views are neglected, or their own projects crossed, they will think it an usurpation: they will criticise the government with bitterness from habit, and in the idea that they must be consistent with themselves in the use of their old tone and language. Lastly, they will be drawn onwards, beyond even their own proper principles, by the crowd of partisans by whose aid the revolution was effected,—honest men, but impatient, who threw themselves into the fight from the mere love of action, more than from their attachment to their own ideas; who, rejoicing in their own momentary importance, seek to continue it when the revolution is terminated,—excellent persons to destroy, but with whom it is impossible to re-edify. Second difficulty—the makers of revolutions become the enemies of the king they have themselves named.

Then, the king brings with him to the throne the prejudices of the royal race from which he is taken. It is not the approbation of the revolutionists that he covets, but that of the men of the old government—the old courtiers, and the depositaries of the old *bon ton*. He is not flattered by an alliance with free states, but seeks that of the courts who resist the movement of the age. He forgets not that in the assembly of kings he is an upstart, and he thinks it necessary to exaggerate his royal dispositions in order to be acknowledged by them. There is not a prerogative, nor even an etiquette of the old court, that he does not desire to revive: neither talent nor genius will save him from this littleness—we have seen Napoleon. He knows, too, better than any other king, the power of the people, and the revolutionary spirit: he knows too well how his predecessor fell, not to be on the alert to prevent himself from falling. His distrust is always alive: he labours incessantly to strengthen himself, to blunt the arms which use he fears, and to take from the people those franchises whose efficacy he dreads. Third difficulty—a revolutionary king is the most vigilant enemy of revolutions.

This clever portraiture of the new French monarchy is followed by another, of the consequences of a revolutionary republic "one and indivisible;" and from these data the author is led to conclude that federation is the only safe issue for a people who have broken up their ancient government, habits, opinions, and prejudices by a successful revolt. In municipal association he sees the first great power that arises to the defence of order in moments of anarchy; it is in such associations that he finds the germs of patriotism put forth the most vigorously—"In the last fifty years how often have we seen national guards and municipalities improvised in a single night. We find that with them power has uniformly been conceded to the most worthy. It is in the free cities that history discovers the greatest instances of devotion and patriotism. Switzerland has but two millions of men; but it is known that every man of them would sacrifice all he possesses, and fight to the last, in defence of independence. What other nation could or would make such a resistance?" "Federative governments (he adds) have been considered as weak against an external enemy;" and it is so, in so far as respects a war of invasion—an incapacity which Sismondi considers but as a pledge of peace. But "consult history (he adds), and you will find scarcely one war of emancipation, one instance of a brilliant popular resistance, which has not assumed a character of federation. That a nation should offer a vigorous defence it must possess vitality, not in its head merely, but in all its members. Wherever the enemy presents himself, there he must encounter, not merely a physical force, but a mind and a will, determined to be free. Every city must defend itself—take a republic which knows that its all is at stake, and that life or death wait upon the issue."

But we must conclude. If, as a whole, the work has less than we could desire in it,

defect is not so much inherent in the bad as in the good qualities of the author: a more sturdy and coarse intellectual and moral structure, and a rougher contact with his species, would have enabled him to approach nearer to the truth. He has been rather a speculator than an actor in the world; and he is more forcibly affected with the immediate disorders of its recent abrupt revolutions than by the less salient, but more diffusive benefits, which time and change are producing to humanity.

The Life of Oliver Goldsmith: from a variety of original sources. By James Prior. (Concluding Notice.)

We are now to enter upon the period when Goldsmith secured for himself his peculiar throne among the authors of England—to number his successes. If we do this with complacency,—if we dwell upon the welcome which the 'Traveller' has found in many a thousand hearts; on the lively interest which the tale of good, simple Dr. Primrose's fortunes will always excite; on the chorus of laughter with which the town received 'She Stoops to Conquer,' in spite of the gloomy prognostics, and the double share of green-room plagues which attended its production—rather than upon the vexatious disorder of the poet's fortunes, we are not inconsiderately losing sight of the substantial for the sake of the shadowy; we are but consistent to our own view of the position of men of genius. The disturbing influences which kept Goldsmith poor to the last, came from within and not from without. Can any one believe, that as a physician, he would have bought one bloom-coloured suit less, or stunted himself in one fee's worth of instinctive and disproportioned liberality; that the studies of Coke and Blackstone would, like a charm, have tamed out of that free, quicksilver, Irish heart of his, its love of praise and display; have made him a money-counter, a man knowing in securities and rates of interest? We can not pity or grieve for him who fulfils the destiny to which he is called by nature: however frequently we may remember, and earnestly inculcate the old saw—that it is his habits, and not his circumstances, that ensure or deny him a competence.

It appears to have been early in the year 1764, that Goldsmith gave the first sign, after many years of silence, that his heavy and laborious prose tasks had not utterly destroyed in him the power of writing verses. Encouraged by the great popularity of Handel's Oratorios, and poor Kit Smart's success in the words of a similar composition, 'Hannah,' which (the poet and composer are now alike all but forgotten) were set to music by Dr. Worgan, he wrote the 'Captivity,' probably in the hope that Dr. Boyce, with whom he had recently made acquaintance, would set it to music. This hope, however, was not fulfilled; and the manuscript was subsequently sold to Messrs. Doddsley and Newbery for ten guineas. Though the versification of this, as of all Goldsmith's poetical works, is smooth and sweet, 'The Captivity' does not possess those peculiar requisites for musical colouring, which would make it an outline tempting for a composer to fill up. Few writers of any fancy and genius, indeed, could, even if they desired, subject themselves to the trammelling forms which are required by their brother "of pipe and wire." For it requires some acquaintance with the technical parts of the science of music, no less than a careful study of the structure of rhyme and powers of language, to enable an author to produce a work of such length and variety, as shall possess any literary merit, and still "sing well." While on this subject, we may point out Goldsmith's second effort in this unhonoured form of composition, the

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"During his same hours pages after Smith's house a lodging codicil; extravagance of a was that of the son (who was of Madeira) of the same by delivery or, according to the equal his land promised under such 'Vicar' little "a that the nearly to printing future fate decided James's which in published, Traveller. This, his bered the dication inscribed natural, affection felt, that touching sociating him: and but for of the time in some sacrifice spect, a dispensa

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'Threnodia Augustalis,' which was "spoken and sung on the death of the Princess Dowager of Wales, at the celebrated public rooms of Mrs. Cornelys, in Soho Square." Mr. Prior, in the excess of his diligence, would father a third work of the same description upon him, fancying that there may have been some connexion between a certain sum of thirteen guineas, drawn for by Goldsmith on Griffin, the bookseller in Fetter Lane, and an oratorio, named 'Israel in Babylon,' performed about the same time at the Opera House.

"During the summer of the same year," continues his biographer, "we trace him to the same house at Islington as before;" and a few pages after he gives us a memorandum of Goldsmith's house-keeping expenses, in the shape of a lodging-house account, with a washing-bill for codicil; these, neither of them show traces of extravagance, and yet we next meet with a notice of a threatened arrest, on which occasion it was that Johnson stepped in,—possessed himself of the manuscript of a novel, which the poet (who was found drowning his cares in a bottle of Madeira,) had recently finished, and disposed of the same to Newbery, for sixty pounds, thereby delivering his friend from the grasp of the law; or, according to the authority of Cumberland, the equally distasteful alternative of marrying his landlady, who had instituted the suit, and promised to withdraw it on that condition. Under such disastrous circumstances, was the "Vicar" ushered into life; and, esteemed so little "a child of grace" by the contracting party, that the bookseller kept his bargain by him nearly two years, before he thought it worth printing. In the interim, however, the poet's future fate and position were in a great measure decided by the sequel to a few lines in the *St. James's Chronicle*, of the 21st of December, 1764, which inform the public, that "This day is published, price one shilling and sixpence, 'The Traveller; or, a Prospect of Society,' a poem." This, his first published poem, (and it be remembered that those were the days of adulatory dedications and golden acknowledgments,) was inscribed to his brother. Nothing was more natural, than that one gifted with every gracious affection so largely as Goldsmith, should have felt, that the success whose threshold he was touching would be doubly enhanced by his associating in it the name of one near and dear to him: and we should hardly have dwelt upon it, but for the circumstance—a curious illustration of the times—that this simple act was extolled in some of the publications of the day, as a noble sacrifice, worthy of being recorded! In this respect, at least, we now write under a healthier dispensation.

To enter into an examination of the peculiar beauties of 'The Traveller,'—to descend upon the vein of natural thought and observation which pervades every line, the rich but not cloying colour and music of its imagery and language; and to consider not merely its intrinsic merits as a poem, but also with reference to the state and condition of the literary world at the time of its appearance, would lead us to an interminable length. We have to do with the man Goldsmith, rather than his works; and, instead of criticism and analysis, we shall pass on to further undertakings and passages of his life, after having noted down one pleasant anecdote:—

"Either Reynolds, or a mutual friend who immediately communicated the story to him, calling at the lodgings of the Poet, opened the door without ceremony, and discovered him not in meditation, or in the throes of poetic birth, but in the boyish office of teaching a favourite dog to sit upright upon its haunches, or, as is commonly said, to beg. Occasionally he glanced his eye over his desk, and occasionally shook his finger at the unwilling pupil in

order to make him retain his position; while on the page before him was written that couplet, with the ink of the second line still wet, from the description of Italy.—

By sports like these are all their cares beguiled,
The sports of children satisfy the child.

The sentiment seemed so appropriate to the employment, that the visitor could not refrain from giving vent to his surprise in a strain of banter, which was received with characteristic good humour, and the admission at once made that the amusement in which he had been engaged had given birth to the idea."

Leaving, then, the variations of text, the criticisms, the coincidences, which Mr. Prior has laboriously collected, to speak for themselves in his pages—and remarking, as a last word concerning this, the most fascinating of our recent classical poems—that, even in that day some management and private influence on the part of friends seem to have been necessary to procure its being heard and judged fairly, we must take a decided step forward to the next work of any consequence by which the poet added to his fame and friends. The roll of the last was swelled by some lofty names; the Earl of Northumberland, then on the point of proceeding to Ireland as Lord Lieutenant, sent for Goldsmith, for the purpose of offering him some assistance and patronage. "This idiot in the affairs of the world," however, (to borrow our harsh phrase from Sir John Hawkins,) simply replied to the great man, "that he looked for support to the booksellers as his best friends; but that he had a brother in Ireland, a clergyman, who stood in need of help!"—Poor Goldsmith! there was too much of the poet about him to make him successful or acceptable as a courtier! 'Edwin and Angelina,' however, was at first printed for the amusement of the Countess of Northumberland.

We must be content to pass this poem by hastily, for the sake of including the last anecdote, with no other remark than that we owe it to the influence of that ballad spirit, for the revival whereof, in defiance of Johnson's satirical caricature, English poetry dares to feel herself deeply indebted to Dr. Percy. Public attention seems not to have fixed itself on this rhymed romance till it appeared a second time, when introduced in the 'Vicar of Wakefield.' Ere this last (the casket, how far more precious than the gem!) could make its appearance, Goldsmith was again obliged to turn his hand to task-work; we read of his meditating a translation of the Lusiad: and Mr. Prior, strangely enough, takes this occasion to bewail "the disadvantages of a professional author," seeing that had Goldsmith been able to take pains and patience, he would have been able to execute his purpose. For ourselves, we would not exchange the sketch of Beau Tibbs and his wife, and their tea-garden airs of fashion, which was probably dashed off to supply the "sassafras" for the week, for any portion of Camoëns' epic which the poet might have turned into English, had he been in the easier position of a gentleman author! The mention of Beau Tibbs naturally enough brings us to the collection of Essays in which he figures; this, with its motto, *Collecta revirescunt*, was published on the 3rd of June, 1765; for it the poet received the sum of twenty guineas. His finances were once again at a very low ebb: Mr. Prior has published a long account of small sums of odd silver lent to him by Mr. Newbery—to which he adds a suspicion that, "among his other labours for this useful and friendly publisher," the friend of Johnson and Reynolds was compelled to stoop his dignity, and re-write, for the use of little masters and misses, the old nursery tale of Goody Two Shoes. We know that he was occupied on a graver (and duller) book—a compilation on Experimental Philosophy. About

this time he once again returned to physic as a means of support; not sorry, it may be, of the excuse for furnishing himself with "a professional wig, a cane, purple silk small-clothes, and a scarlet roquelaure, buttoned to the chin." These, however, were not long required for their legitimate uses: in consequence of a professional affront, Goldsmith presently declared, "that he would leave off prescribing for friends." "Do so, my dear Doctor," replied Topham Beauclerk, "whenever you undertake to kill, let it be only your enemies."

It was on the 27th of March, 1766, that the 'Vicar of Wakefield' was published, after two years of indifference or hesitation on the part of its purchaser. We must be satisfied with this record; for here, also, we must refrain from the thousand remarks and remembrances to which every page, every line, of this delicious tale give rise. It is strange that so few of our modern novelists have endeavoured to unite in their works that union of heart and simplicity and humour, which (belonging to no particular period) gives to it a freshness and an interest which will never grow old. They colour twice as highly—their passion or their merriment is twice as loud and importunate, their attitudes and groups twice as imposing; but to which of their rouged, or stilted, or over-dressed creations can we promise so long and so beloved a life, as to the homely innocent vicar and his wife, with her crimson paduaso?—which of their drolls will live when Moses, with his gross of green spectacles, and the seven Miss Flamboroughs, with their seven China oranges, are forgotten?

We come next to the notice that it was "in the summer of this year (1766) that he first seriously contemplated writing for the stage." With the 'Beauties of English Poesy,' and the 'Short English Grammar,' and the 'Voyage of Commodore Byron in the *Dolphin*,' in all of which Goldsmith had a hand, we must pass not a few pleasant anecdotes of his good-nature, and innocent vanity, and absence of mind; we must, too, leave untouched all the preliminary objections, and cabals, and intrigues, which, according to dramatic usage, made the birth of the 'Good-natured Man' a lingering and painful passage from darkness into day. The comedy was at last produced on Friday, the 29th of January, 1768.

"Dr. Johnson, according to promise, furnished the Prologue, several of his acquaintance attended to give it their support, and the performers were not remiss in their exertions. The play, notwithstanding these aids, met with less warmth of applause than most of his friends anticipated; the taste of the town had become sentimental; and the scene of the bailiffs in the opening of the third act, appeared so broad in its humour as to keep the fate of the piece some time in suspense; nor was its safety fully assured till that scene in the fourth act, where Shuter, in the character of Croaker, read the supposed incendiary letter."

It was not till a later period, when Miss Hardcastle and Tony Lumpkin, between them, laughed the town into an uproar, that a comedy which was otherwise than sentimental, stood any fair chance of succeeding. 'The Good-natured Man,' therefore, though by many esteemed superior to its more popular successor, failed to hit the taste of the multitude, and poor Goldsmith—not the least sanguine of his countrymen—had to chew the cud of disappointment—which, as it comes the most suddenly to the aspirant for dramatic success, comes to him also the most bitterly. We can never forgive Johnson for making what he called "the comical and unnecessarily exact recital" of its author's feelings a subject of ridicule at Thrale's table. What literary man is there who cannot understand the wretched excitement with which, after leaving the theatre, he chatted gaily among his

friends at the club, and even, to blazon his indifference, forced out the favourite song of the old woman tossed in a blanket?—who cannot enter into the misery of his after-confession, "I verily believe that if I had put a bit in my mouth it would have strangled me on the spot"? These excesses, it is true, are foolish and morbid—but the last part that any brother of the craft should play, is that of Ham the mocker.

In the spring of the same year Goldsmith lost his brother Henry, for whom he had vainly tried to obtain preferment at the hand of some of his great friends; his life continued to be divided between labour and society, between the desk and the dictionary, and excursions to Blackheath, Wandsworth, &c.—or, best of all, the Chelsea Bun-house, where he gathered round him a host of queer companions and good fellows. He must have been in easier circumstances than formerly, for he could afford to employ an occasional amanuensis, one Peter Barlow; and he had money to put into the open drawer, his bank, to which his unsuspecting thoughtlessness gave every one in the house free access. Sometimes he removed to a short distance out of town for leisure, sometimes gave a gaudy dinner in the Temple, or we hear of him in mixed society, "making Mrs. Seguin laugh" by the manner in which he went through a minuet with her, or amusing little George Colman by conjuring tricks. In February 1769, he wrote an Epilogue for 'The Sisters,' by Mrs. Lennox, and "at this period, not in 1771, as is commonly supposed, he first formed the design of writing a 'History of Animated Nature,' to which there were several inducements." For this work (which Johnson declared he would make "as interesting as a Persian tale,") he was to receive the then unusually large sum of eight hundred guineas. In the middle of May appeared the well-known 'Roman History,' the publication of which was immediately followed by the project for the 'History of England.' This busy year (1769) closed with his election as Professor of History to the Royal Academy, Johnson being at the same time nominated to the Professorship of Ancient Literature.

Towards the conclusion of 1769 "his literary occupations appear to have been multifarious," besides the undertakings above mentioned, he was "avowedly at work in finishing and polishing the Deserted Village," and editing an edition of the poems of Dr. Parnell. His dress kept pace with the number of engagements, and a descendant of "Mr. John Filby, of the Harrow, in Water Lane," (*vide* Boswell) has furnished to Mr. Prior a rare list of suits, of all degrees of splendour, furnished by his ancestor to the poet—one entry exactly confirming Boswell's anecdote of the bloom-coloured suit. We must not, however, begin to enumerate them, but resolutely proceed. In the end of May, 1770, appeared 'The Deserted Village.' Before September came in, the work had gone through a fifth edition. It is needless, once again, to enforce the parallel between 'Lissoy' and 'Sweet Auburn,' or once again to illustrate the fact that here, as in his other works, he drew upon his memory and observation, rather than his invention, for his scenes and characters. We may, indeed, venture a general remark, that he was as deficient in constructiveness as he was happy in delineation; his plots are all of them confused in their incidents, and forcibly, rather than dexterously, unravelled.

With 'The Deserted Village,' Goldsmith threatened to take leave of poetry,—as if this was possible, in one whose life had been an *Irish melody!*—an irregular mixture of sadness and jocularity. The irritability, which is strangely often the companion of success, began to creep over him: he fancied that he was neglected,

but the true noble heart, which ought to belong to his calling, never forsook him; and it might not be amiss to write the following anecdote in letters of gold, for the benefit of our rising literary men:—

"A few months," writes Mr. Montagu, "before the death of Dr. Scott, author of Anti-Sæamus and other political tracts in support of Lord North's administration, I happened to dine with him in company with my friend Sir George Tuthill, who was the Doctor's physician. After dinner Dr. Scott mentioned, as matter of astonishment and a proof of the folly of men who are according to common opinion ignorant of the world, that he was once sent with a *carte blanche* from the ministry to Oliver Goldsmith to induce him to write in favour of the administration. 'I found him,' said the Doctor, 'in a miserable set of chambers in the Temple; I told him my authority; I told him that I was empowered to pay most liberally for his exertions, and, would you believe it! he was so absurd as to say—'I can earn as much as will supply my wants without writing for any party; the assistance therefore you offer is unnecessary to me,' and so I left him," added Dr. Scott, "in his garret."

How would Boswell have crowded, if Johnson had made such a sacrifice!

"Akin to the disinterestedness which induced him to refuse the proposal from the ministry, the following story is told. Having received for the Deserted Village a note for one hundred guineas, he was told by a friend whom he met when returning from the bookseller, that it was a large sum for a short performance; and seeming to be of the same opinion by the remark 'that it was more perhaps than the honest man could afford,' he returned and delivered it up."

We have already noticed the Life of Parnell; the next tempting passage describes the poet's holiday journey to France with the Hornecks; some of the humours whereof, Boswell contrived to relate in a disparaging and spiteful manner. But our task must be brought to a close, as the Memoirs of that period are too fully written, and too familiarly known, to demand any detailed examination or abstract. The Life of Parnell was succeeded by the Life of Bolingbroke. We next find the poet laughed at by Johnson, and quarrelling with his friend Dr. Percy, in his eagerness to maintain the authenticity of the celebrated Rowley MSS.; next making the town merry over his 'Haunch of Venison.' The chapter which follows the one treating of this lively sketch, is full of gossip; it contains also notices of the History of England, which was published in 1771, and a host of pleasant anecdotes, showing that the eccentricities of the man ripened rather than wore out, as he grew older. We find him also writing the prologue of 'Zobeide,' Voltaire's tragedy, adapted to the English stage by Mr. Cradock, the 'Threnodia Augustalis,' to which allusion has already been made, and working busily at his 'Animated Nature.'

Our next halting-place must be the first night of 'She Stoops to Conquer,' the 15th of March, 1773. The fate of this play, which, it seems, every one was resolved must fail, is a lesson for those who pin their faith on green-room opinion, or the too partial or too gloomy anticipations of private friends. In spite of the sneers let loose against it at the rehearsals; in spite of Colman's "Pshaw, my dear Doctor, of what consequence is a squib, when we have been sitting on a barrel of gunpowder these two hours?" and Woodward's *dictum*, on throwing up his part of Tony Lumpkin, that the play "dwindled and dwindled, till at last it went out like the snuff of a candle;"—in spite of bad actors, bad dresses, and bad scenery, the play seized such hold of the stage, as it will take a long time, we suspect, to loosen. Let those who are curious in reading of the terrors and vicissitudes of a first night, and who would learn how strongly the tide of flattery sets

in, when the success is once gained, turn to Mr. Prior's pages, and read there Mr. Cumberland's amusing, but somewhat apocryphal narrative, and the following string of fulsome compliments in prose and rhyme, which the poet ought to have scorned. We fear, alas! that he was but a man, and swallowed them. This was Goldsmith's last venture on the stage, with the exception of a slight piece, 'The Grumbler,' which he subsequently altered and condensed for the benefit of Quick, the Tony who had driven him so triumphantly over the perils of Crackscull Common, and laid thereby the foundation of his own subsequent popularity.

The two subsequent chapters of *Ana* we must pass, though therein is recorded Goldsmith's beating of Evans the bookseller, in revenge of an offensive critique upon the comedy, which had appeared in the *London Packet*,—another *memento* that there is nothing new under the sun, even in the item of "the quarrels of authors." We also meet with mention of a projected novel, which, when completed, proved to be nothing more than a prose version of 'The Good-natured Man,' (a further proof of the want of creative power noticed before,) and was therefore rejected by Newbery. Here, too, comes the plan of that 'Dictionary of the Arts and Sciences,' which, had it been completed, must (from the writer its editor wished to engage) have been a delightful, if not a valuable work; and after this, a notice of the 'History of Greece,' for the writing and compiling of which, he received from Griffin the sum of two hundred and fifty pounds, in June, 1773. We trust that even our imperfect abstract and extracts have sufficiently proved the character of the poet, otherwise we should grieve to be hurried along, over pages so rich in illustrative matter as those in question. "During the latter end of 1773, and the early part of the following year—

"Besides writing and carrying through the press the Grecian History, Goldsmith was engaged in a similar way upon the History of the Earth and Animated Nature, and upon a third History of England in one large volume duodecimo for the use of schools, which came out after his death in September 1774. He was likewise revising the Enquiry into Polite Learning for a new edition; writing at favourable intervals the poem of Retaliation; translating the Comic Romance of Scarron; and arranging poems gleaned in part probably for the Dictionary of Arts, into a work in two volumes commenced long before and mentioned in a preceding page, 'A Survey of Experimental Philosophy,' considered in its present state of Improvement."

The address which he wrote for Mrs. Yates, at the re-opening of the Opera House in November, 1773, must not be forgotten. We are now come to 'Retaliation,' that most pleasant and pungent of all literary portrait galleries, by which the poet (now, alas! not far from his last days,) added to the triumphs he had gained as a historian, a poet, a novelist, and an essay writer, those (we verily believe the most difficult of all) which belong to a satirist successful without malignity. This piece requires no comment: one anecdote, however, must be given, as linking it with the close of Goldsmith's career:—

"After the fourth edition of this poem was printed, the publisher received an Epitaph on Mr. Whitefoord from a friend of the late Doctor Goldsmith, inclosed in a letter of which the following is an abstract:—

"I have in my possession a sheet of paper containing near forty lines in the Doctor's own handwriting; there are many scattered broken verses on Sir Joshua Reynolds, Counsellor Ridge, Mr. Beauchler, and Mr. Whitefoord. The Epitaph on the last-mentioned gentleman is the only one that is finished, and therefore I have copied it that you may add it to the next edition. It is a striking proof of Doctor Goldsmith's good nature. I saw this sheet of paper in the Doctor's room five or six days before

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Rambles

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he died; and as I had got all the other epitaphs, I asked him if I might take it. In truth you may, my boy, (replied he), for it will be of no use to me where I am going."

Here, "though loth to depart," we must finish; for the 'Animated Nature' can claim no extended mention; it did not appear till the month of June of the same year after its industrious, warm-hearted compiler was no more! He died on the 4th of April; leaving behind him not merely a series of works which stand alone in English literature—and not a few of them are, of their kind, perfect—but the memory of a career, which is full of warning, encouragement, and instruction to all who would enter upon literature as a profession. As such, we have dwelt upon it somewhat diffusely; though compelled to suppress a thousand remarks which Mr. Prior's pages, so pregnant in matter, have suggested.

Rambles in Egypt and Candia. By Captain C. R. Scott. 2 vols. 8vo. Colburn.

EVERY important change effected in the political and social condition of a large mass of mankind must, of necessity, give rise to a multitude of conjectures respecting its ultimate tendencies, as various as the hopes, the wishes, or the prejudices of the speculators; and these guesses inevitably become a species of "foregone conclusions" that distort the views of those who witness its development. It is sufficiently amusing to read the French pamphlets published in the age of our own revolution, and see there the bold predictions whose falsehood was demonstrated ere the year in which they were issued had completed its circle; the importance assigned to what we now know to have been trifles, and the total neglect of the circumstances that really marked the progress and direction of the movement. It is possible that Frenchmen may reciprocate this accusation, and aver that their revolution was similarly misunderstood, and that foreigners had never formed a just notion of its origin, and still less of its course, until they had witnessed its end. If European nations whose coasts are in sight of each other, whose creeds are not irreconcilable, whose rules of right and wrong are precisely the same, should thus err in their estimates, we cannot be surprised that European travellers should go astray in their descriptions of the great moral revolution that is now re-modelling the Mohammedan nations.

The outward and visible signs of change have been chronicled by a thousand pens: hats are worn at Damascus, and turbans are banished from Constantinople; the Turk takes his newspaper as regularly as his pipe; and the death of the editor of the *Moniteur Ottoman* is announced with more formality by his brethren of the press in Western Europe, than they would accord to the obsequies of all his masters, Sultan and Divan included. But these circumstances do not by any means convey an adequate notion of the change that has been wrought; we do not sufficiently consider that the boast of the Turks was their perfect immovability—that every innovation, however small, was considered sinful—that the Koran was their social as well as their religious guide—and that never was English lawyer more fettered by precedent in drawing a special plea than was a Mohammedan statesman in issuing a proclamation. The greatest error that has been committed respecting the Turkish and the Egyptian rulers is, that they are both represented as absolute despots, when, in truth, both are struggling with all their might against the more galling despotism of inveterate prejudice; and both must, of course, meet the inevitable fate of all reformers, to be hated by one party for doing too much, and to be despised by another for doing too little.

On the ultimate effects of the Egyptian revolution, it is not our purpose to speculate—we wait the end: the results it has already produced are, however, fairly within our cognizance, and we shall proceed to sketch them, on Captain Scott's authority, whose statements come recommended by a simplicity and plainness that strongly vouch for their truth, in spite of the prejudices of party, which are too often apparent. He has, we think, pointed out for the first time, the cause why the change commenced by Mohammed Ali, whether for good or for ill, must go on; the pacha has done that which has no parallel in Egyptian history, he has organized a native military force, and made the entire system of his government depend on its maintenance.

We have said that such a force is without a parallel in Egypt, for under its native sovereigns the soldiers were a caste, and under all its successive races of conquerors, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Saracens, and Mamelukes, the country was garrisoned by mercenaries. The Fellahs were slaves in the days of the Pharaohs, and slaves they continued until the accession of Mohammed Ali; and he called their energies into action, not from any innate love of freedom, but to save his neck from the bow-string, with which it was menaced by the Turks. But the hardest task in the world, is to improve the condition of a serf; the degraded being himself is generally one of the fiercest opponents of his own liberation. We hear it daily repeated, that many negroes in the West Indies bitterly lament their emancipation; and we find in the circumstance, arguments, not against the liberty recently bestowed, but the thralldom so long continued. Mohammed has succeeded in raising the Fellah to feel himself a man; but Captain Scott very feebly pourtrays all the obstacles that the pacha had to encounter:—

"Mohammed Ali found the native Egyptians sunk in the lowest depth of misery and degradation—a race of beings human only in form and the faculty of speech. Hence, to judge of the correctness of the abuse that has been heaped upon him, we must compare their present state with their condition at that period, when an obvious improvement is apparent—bearing in mind, at the same time, that, even amongst civilized nations, there is no short cut, no royal road, to secure their well-being. Whilst the path of the Egyptian Viceroy appeared to be strewn with almost insuperable difficulties, the progress that has been made towards this desirable end has been wonderfully great, for not only had Mohammed Ali to remove the overwhelming mass of religious prejudices that weighed down the Egyptian nation, and to break through the barrier of ignorance that blinded it to its state of degradation, but he had to overcome the opposition of all those powerful chieftains whose interest it was to keep their vassal Fellahs in this debased and ignorant condition, and to brave the authority of the Viceregent and the Prophet."

The character of Ibrahim Pacha is less known than that of Mohammed Ali; even his relationship to the pacha is the subject of controversy, but, whether he be son or nephew, he is destined to inherit Mohammed's power, and consequently on his character the permanence of the pacha's system must depend. We do not mean that Turkey will in any case re-establish her ancient sway over Egypt—England has just as much chance of recovering her American colonies;—but the character of the next ruler must determine whether the result of the revolution will be complete anarchy or a settled government. Ibrahim is, however, depicted in more various forms than Mohammed Ali himself; Captain Scott takes a favourable view of his character:—

"Judging from Ibrahim Pasha's actions, he cannot be denied the possession of the qualities of courage in the field and tact in the cabinet; whilst, by the encouragement he gives to agriculture, the protection he affords to foreigners, and the establishment

of numerous schools and colonies at his own expense, it may be presumed he is desirous of promoting the welfare of the country over which he looks forward to rule."

His shrewdness and sarcastic power are evinced in the following anecdote:—

"At an inspection of the French army sent to the Morea, in 1827, Ibrahim Pasha, pointing to some particularly ill-conditioned and badly clothed regiments, asked Marshal Maisot what troops they were: 'They are some that have just arrived from Spain,' replied the French Generalissimo, 'and have not yet had an opportunity of receiving new appointments.' 'What!' exclaimed the Turk, with well-feigned astonishment, 'do you employ the same troops to give liberty to the Greeks that have been making slaves of the Spaniards?'

We must, however, protest against our gallant Captain's excuse for Ibrahim's severities, to use no harsher phrase, in Syria and the Morea; our author coolly says—

"If the whole population of Palestine had been cut off by 'one fell swoop' of the despotic sword of the 'ferocious Ibrahim'—great as would have been the loss of human life, it would have been a gain to civilization."

"The war in the Morea was certainly carried on in the most barbarous manner, but in this species of warfare the Greeks have the honour of the initiative."

Granting both assertions to be true, we must bear in mind the effect that such atrocities, however excusable, produce on the perpetrators. There is no doubt that the criminals who have been executed during the last twenty years in any capital city were legally liable to the penalty, but yet men recoil from all contact with the executioner; and were the Syrians and Greeks ten thousand times worse than they are here represented, the author of their wholesale destruction must have been brutal in feeling before he issued the order, and must have been rendered tenfold more ferocious after such indulgence of his thirst for blood. Besides, it is a mere schoolboy sophism, though it once enjoyed the patronage of Paley, to speak of the guilt of a nation; the world has witnessed too many atrocities excused by these sweeping generalities to bear their repetition. If, because Greeks committed atrocious butcheries at Tripolizza, it be just to massacre Greeks in retaliation, why should not an English army be made responsible for the barbarities that followed the battle of Culloden? The greatest fault we have to find with Captain Scott is his admiration of what he is pleased to term "summary justice;" he deems stern military rule superior to any form of government, and would almost substitute the drum-head court martial for the King's Bench or Common Pleas. In the present condition of Egypt, both external and internal, a despotic form of government is perhaps inevitable; but it is a strange process to deduce inferences from such a country in favour of despotism in the abstract.

We have ever been persuaded that the most important benefits that Mohammed Ali has conferred upon Egypt were those forced upon him by the circumstances of his position—the creation of a native army, and the encouragement of commerce; but we much doubt the permanence of those arising from his natural disposition, or newly-acquired love of civilization. His system of taxation is onerous in the extreme, his countless monopolies prove him to be both selfish and short-sighted,—that is, in one word, ignorant. That he wishes for the happiness of Egypt cannot be doubted, for his interest is inseparable from its prosperity, and that the country has improved under his government is unquestionable; but we much doubt whether his projects will not seriously injure his performances, and his anxiety for a visionary future destroy the substantial

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fruits of the past. He has a gigantic navy to protect merchant vessels, whose tonnage does not exceed half that of his ships of war; he is planning rail-roads, not to facilitate, but to create traffic; and Captain Scott describes to us one of his latest projects, which may put to the blush the whole academy of Laputa.

"All Mohammed Ali's *bubbles* sink, however, into insignificance, when compared to his project to dam the Nile. This notable enterprise has been undertaken at the suggestion of the sect of St. Simonians resident at Cairo, and the 'Père Enfantin' has been pleased to extend his fatherly care towards it as chief engineer and *treasurer*, assisted in his labours by a Monsieur Lelan—an *élève* of the Polytechnic School at Paris. The spot selected for the stupendous work is a few miles below the bifurcation of the Rosetta and Damietta branches of the river, and its object is to raise the water to the height of ten feet above its usual level at low Nile, so as to form a head of water, from which every part of the Delta can be irrigated at all seasons of the year.

"The work, as originally projected, was feasible, though sufficiently daring to have made even a Brunel pause before undertaking it: but the enormous expense that would have been occasioned for timber fit for piles to make a foundation has caused that part of the plan to be abandoned, and the dam is to be formed altogether of stones, and to rest on the sandy substratum of the Delta! None of the stones which I saw collected for the work exceeded four feet in length, and the whole business looks so like a job, as almost to make one doubt the sincerity of the cosmopolitan father's profession, that he acts solely '*pour l'amour de la famille universelle des hommes.*'

"It is proposed to have bridges across the two branches of the river, and an intermediate one over the canal, which must necessarily be made, to convey the irrigating stream into the Delta. The two principal bridges will be about five miles apart, the whole of which distance must be banked, to resist the constant pressure of this immense head of water. Should this work ever be brought to a happy conclusion—which, without professing a knowledge of *hydromancy*, I will venture to predict *it will not*—the consequences inevitably must be, that the whole system of canals, dykes, and sluices of the Delta, will have to undergo an alteration, and its inhabitants will be constantly exposed to the risk of being themselves, and (what will then be of minor importance), having their cattle, fields, date groves, and habitations, swept away; either by the river's forcing the dam, or by its making itself another channel."

But while we think that the personal character of the ruler has been invested with too much importance in the great change that has taken place, we also deem that too little attention has been paid to that of the chief instruments by which he has lately worked. The Arab Fellahs of Egypt were never such fanatics as the Turks, the Persians, or the Moors; since the days of the Fatimite Khaliphs, Egypt has been rife with Mohammedan heretics, and this want of orthodoxy was often made a pretext for Turkish oppression. To the freedom with which the Egyptians are allowed to show their laxity of faith, fully as much as to any march of liberality, must we attribute the following result of a trial, which even now would have a different termination at Constantinople.

"A ridiculous instance of the change effected in public opinion of late occurred a short time previously to my arrival at the Egyptian capital: a Levantine tradesman of Cairo, wishing, probably, to do honour to his patron St. Anthony, and at the same time give his friends a treat, took a joint of pork to be cooked at a Mohammedan bakehouse. The backsliding baker of the faithful made no scruple in admitting the unclean flesh to cook in company with orthodox meats, but one of his customers—a more rigid observer of the Koran—on coming for his bit of buffalo, discovered it with horror, baking alongside the smoking ribs and crackling skin of the abominated beast, and raised an outcry against the offending baker, who was instantly dragged before Habib Effendi (a sort of sitting Magistrate of

the Egyptian metropolis) and ordered to explain forthwith his reason for daring thus to set the mandates of the Prophet at defiance. 'Truly,' said the trembling culprit, 'I have lately witnessed such changes in Egypt, that I thought I was committing no sin. Do I not daily see Moslim soldiers equipped as Franks? Beys, half-dressed as Franks? Women shamelessly exposing their faces like Franks? Frank dishes eaten—nay, even Frank wines drunk? Could I, with such sights before my eyes, suppose there was any sin in allowing a piece of Frank pork to bake quietly by the side of Mussulmanish meats?'—adding that, in what he had done, he had, in fact, but acted up to the 'spirit of the age.' The Mohammedan sage was a little staggered; he admitted, however true all that had been stated might be, (and he regretted to say that there was much in the example of some who should know better, to lead away ignorant men like the culprit,) yet he was placed there to see that all the faithful inhabitants of Cairo acted up to the *spirit of the Koran*—that pork was pork; and the precepts of the Prophet must be obeyed. A quibbling Mullah here observed, that *fire* was a purifier of all things—upon which, after a consultation, it was decided, that no harm could have been done to the other meats in the oven, by the steam of the Levantine's pork, and the complaint was dismissed. The triumphant baker now professes to roast 'Frank and other meats,' and has had a thriving business ever since the wise decision of the judge in his favour."

The greatest evil that is to be found in the Fellah character is unconquerable indolence, and the cause of this, as of the idleness imputed to the peasantry of other nations, is a long continuance of misgovernment; no man will toil when there is no chance of his enjoying the fruits of his labours; but when once the Fellah has been compelled to join the army, he becomes an active and faithful soldier. Compulsion, according to Captain Scott, is necessary, for the miserable serfs cling to their native huts with a pertinacity which would appear strange, if experience did not prove to us that the more wretched the condition of a peasantry is, the less are the desires and hopes of improvement.

"The dislike that the fellah of Egypt has to quit his native place is unconquerable. To us Englishmen, it appears almost incredible that young men of from eighteen to twenty-five years of age should regard as a hardship the being obliged to leave home: it is with them, nevertheless, the grievance universally complained of, and may be accounted for by the ties of early marriages; the indolence in which men grow up who possess the means of subsistence at the cost of but little exertion and fatigue; the total want of mental cultivation, and consequent ignorance of there being any other pleasures in this life, besides the gratification of the passions in common with the brute creation: the full enjoyment of which is the reward held out to the good Mussulman, in the sensual paradise of his prophet.

"The Egyptian fellah sees a companion—perhaps a brother—who wallowed in the same filth, and was covered with the same disgusting vermin as himself; who fed on the same coarse food, and was clothed with similar rags; dragged in handcuffs from his native village to be made a soldier or sailor. He sees him return in a few years, metamorphosed into a half-civilized being, provided with all the necessities of life, smart in his appearance, and liking his new state of existence; but neither his envy nor his ambition is excited. Of patriotism he has little notion, except that he would rather be governed by the Sheik el beld, his countryman, than spurned and bullied by his former oppressor, the Turk."

The political regeneration of Egypt can only be effected by raising the character of the Fellahs: canals and railroads may be laid out, military schools established, colleges founded, and lecturers imported from France and Italy; but, unless improvement strikes its roots into the soil, it will wither like an exotic when the present superintendence of its culture is relaxed. Much has been done by creating a native army; a more important task remains, the formation of a

landed interest, which would put an end to the present fluctuations in the property of the soil, and the abolition of the monopolies that press most severely on the rights of industry. Egypt is now virtually an independent state, but much obscurity hangs over the future prospects of its internal condition; it is a less difficult investigation to examine how its admission into the catalogue of nations will affect the political and commercial interests of the European powers, but this can be done more conveniently when we come to review Captain Scott's account of the valuable but almost unexplored island of Candia.

The Letters and Works of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Edited by her Great-Grandson, Lord Wharncliffe. 3 vols. 8vo. Bentley.

We have been in possession of the two first volumes of this interesting work for some weeks, and have indeed availed ourselves of the introductory anecdotes in the columns of our journal, but we have not treated the work in any other way than as one affording us pleasant extracts reserving what we had to say of the character of the lady, and the ability shown in her writings until we had the collection of productions in poetry and prose complete before us, as vouch'd by the noble editor, Lord Wharncliffe. We now have three very handsome volumes, full of the acuteness which invariably marks a clever woman's observations on human nature, full of smartness, oddity, and wisdom; full of intensity, spirit, and beauty,—and certainly composing no trifling addition to that department of literature,—"the gay memoir!" which forms the soul of light reading, and furnishes men, for the dinner-table and the drawing-room, with every easy grace and gentle reminiscence necessary to make him "a wit among lords," and a very accomplished personage with the delightful inhabitants of the Canzou, and Turban.

The works of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu are extremely well-known, and luckily their very publicity will serve, like the morning gun in 'The Critic,' to save a great deal of our description "about gilding the Eastern Hemisphere," &c. She lived in very memorable days, and with most memorable men! She was mixed up with court influences, and with the refined scandals of her age; she was *wreathed* with, and she *written* under the love and the hatred of Pope! She was an impassioned, sensible, madcap beauty a nineteen—reasoned with her lover, like a second Minerva not out of her teens, and ran away with the impetuosity of a rich school-girl in search of that *will-o'-the-wisp* to such a creature, matrimonial happiness! The letters of this singular compound of coldness and voluptuousness of wit and common sense, of audacity and discretion, of profound insight into character and extreme airy vivacity,—exhibit an extraordinary instance of the thoughts and language being honestly coloured by circumstances, and forming a sort of *diorama* of the mind and heart, passing before the eye of the admiring reader, in Stanfield hues. The early letters to Mr. Wortley are full of deep penetration and easy grace; indeed *she makes the offer*, in an irresistible manner! The letters after marriage are wise and witty. Those to Lady Mar are perhaps a little too vivacious and *undressed*; but they are, in their way, incomparable compositions; and the epistles (for such they may be called) to the Countess of Bute cannot be surpassed in their delectable peasantry, and we might add, masculine good sense. The letters from Constantinople do not require to be recalled by us to the attention of our readers. Unrivalled in spirit, animation, and conciseness, if they at times a little "o'erstep the modesty of nature," they will not be easily displaced by the most formal and most faithful of Turkish travellers.

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We perhaps need hardly now say, that we are great admirers of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Her talents and her whims laid her open in her breathing hours, and of course, after her death, to much scandal, and produced her a decent allowance of enemies; but it is impossible to rise up from a perusal of her letters, without feeling that you have been admitted into an elegant *boudoir* of the mind, and that you have communed with one, who brought to the conference more than her fair share of wit, intelligence and beauty.

But we are detaining our readers from the work itself; we are wasting all our tediousness upon them, instead of doing that which, as discreet public servants, we ought to do, viz. announcing the name of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, loudly and distinctly up through our columns, and allowing her then to make her own way, take her own place, and say her own brilliant pleasantries. *Our carriage, and not her ladyship's, stops the way!*

The letters which are new to the reader are some of those to her sister Lady Mar,—those to Lady Pomfret in the second volume, and to Sir James and Lady F. Stewart in the third, and are worthy (certainly the latter ones) of their distinguished public predecessors. From these we shall make some extracts, and we shall certainly return to the volumes in a succeeding number. Would not the following letter appear to be written of this, instead of any preceding day—so perpetually are the times getting worse?

"There are some moments when I have so great an inclination to converse with dear Lady Pomfret, that I want but little of galloping to Paris to sit with you one afternoon; which would very well pay me for my journey. Though this correspondence has every charm in it to make a correspondence agreeable, yet I have still a thousand things to say and hear, which cannot be communicated at this distance. Our mobs grow very horrible; here are a vast number of legs and arms that only want a head to make a very formidable body. But while we readers of history are, perhaps, refining too much, the happier part of our sex are more usefully employed in preparation for the birth-day, where I hear Lady Pembroke is to shine in a particular manner, and Lady Cowper to exhibit some new devices worthy of her genius. The Bath is the present scene of gallantry and magnificence, where many caresses are bestowed, not from admiration of the present, but from spite to the absent. The most remarkable circumstance I hear is a coolness in the Earl of Chesterfield, which occasions much speculation; it must be disagreeable to play an under-part in a second-rate theatre. To me that have always been an humble spectator, it appears odd, to see so few desirous to quit the stage, though time and infirmities have disabled them from making a tolerable figure there. Our drama is at present carried on by such whimsical management, I am half inclined to think we shall shortly have no plays at all. I begin to be of opinion that the new northern actress has very good sense; she hardly appears at all, and that conduct almost wears out the disapprobation of the public. I believe you are already tired with this long dissertation on so trifling a subject; I wish I could enliven my letter with some account of literature; but wit and pleasure are no more, and people play the fool with great impunity; being very sure there is not spirit enough left in the nation to set their follies in a ridiculous light. Pamphlets are the sole productions of our modern authors, and those profoundly stupid. To you that enjoy a purer air, and meet at least with vivacity whenever you meet company, this may appear extraordinary; but recollect, dear madam, in what condition you left us; and you will easily believe to what state we are fallen. I know nothing lively but what I feel in my own heart, and that only in what relates to your ladyship; in other respects I partake of the contagion, as you will plainly see by these presents; but I am ever, with the utmost affection,

Yours, &c. &c."

The following truly is a good specimen of

"the prerogative" of the sex, and will not be a bad historical hint for that parliamentary champion, who enters the lists session by session, in favour of universal female suffrage, and the demolition of the ventilator:

"At the last warm debate in the House of Lords, it was unanimously resolved there should be no crowd of unnecessary auditors; consequently the fair sex were excluded, and the gallery destined to the sole use of the House of Commons. Notwithstanding which determination, a tribe of dames resolved to show on this occasion, that neither men nor laws could resist them. These heroines were Lady Huntingdon,† the Duchess of Queensbury, the Duchess of Lancaster, Lady Westmoreland, Lady Cambier, Lady Charlotte Edwin, Lady Archibald Hamilton and her daughter, Mrs. Scott, and Mrs. Pendarvis, and Lady Frances Saunderson. I am thus particular in their names, since I look upon them to be the boldest assertors and most resigned sufferers for liberty, I ever read of. They presented themselves at the door at nine o'clock in the morning, where Sir William Saunderson respectfully informed them the Chancellor had made an order against their admittance. The Duchess of Queensbury, at head of the squadron, pished at the ill-breeding of a mere lawyer, and desired him to let them up stairs privately. After some modest refusals he swore by G—he would not let them in. Her grace, with a noble warmth, answered, by G—they would come in, in spite of the Chancellor and the whole House. This being reported, the Peers resolved to starve them out; an order was made that the doors should not be opened till they had raised their siege. These Amazons now showed themselves qualified for the duty even of foot-soldiers; they stood there till five in the afternoon, without either sustenance or evacuation, every now and then playing volleys of thumps, kicks, and raps, against the door, with so much violence that the speakers in the House were scarce heard. When the Lords were not to be conquered by this, the two Duchesses (very well apprized of the use of stratagems in war) commanded a dead silence of half an hour; and the Chancellor, who thought this a certain proof of their absence, (the Commons also being very impatient to enter,) gave order for the opening of the door; upon which they all rushed in, pushed aside their competitors, and placed themselves in the front rows of the gallery. They stayed there till after eleven, when the House rose; and during the debate gave applause, and showed marks of dislike, not only by smiles and winks (which have always been allowed in these cases), but by noisy laughs and apparent contempts; which is supposed the true reason why poor Lord Hervey spoke miserably. I beg your pardon, dear madam, for this long relation; but 'tis impossible to be short on so copious a subject; and you must own this action very well worthy of record, and I think not to be paralleled in any history, ancient or modern. I look so little in my own eyes (who was at that time ingloriously sitting over a tea-table), I hardly dare subscribe myself even,

Yours."

We cannot refrain wishing to see the Duchess of Roxburgh, the Duchess of Richmond, the Duchess of St. Albans, and the rest, trying their rights with Lord Eldon and the Duke of Wellington; with my Lord Cottenham (*see Pepys' Memoirs*) in his sternest of moments!

What pleasant gossip marks the following:

"I never was more surprised than at the death of the Duchess of Cleveland; I thought her discretion and constitution made to last at least as long as her father's. I beg you to let me know what accident has destroyed that fine figure which seemed built to last an age. You are very unjust to me in regard to the Marquis de Beaufort; he is too much an Englishman not to be inquisitive after the news of London. There has passed nothing there since he left it that he has not been informed of. Lord Lempster can tell you that before I came to Turin he had mentioned to him that he had had the honour of seeing his mother. He removed from Chambery with his whole family about the same time I left it; and for the same reason they passed into Italy; and if Piedmont proves

the theatre of war, intend to refuge themselves at Lucca. I am much mortified that I can have no opportunity of giving him so great a pleasure as I know your compliment would be; his civilities to me deserving all possible gratitude. His daughter is but seven years old, a little angel both in face and shape. *A propos* of angels, I am astonished Lady Sophia does not condescend to leave some copies of her face for the benefit of posterity; 'tis quite impossible she should not command what matches she pleases, when such pugs as Miss Hamilton can become peeresses; and I am still of opinion that it depended on her to be my relation.

"Here are several English ladies established, none I ever saw before; but they behave with decency, and give a good impression of our conduct, though their pale complexions and stiff stays do not give the French any inclination to imitate our dress.

"Notwithstanding the dullness of this letter, I have so much confidence in your ladyship's charity, I flatter myself you will be so good as to answer it. I beg you would direct to me 'recommandé à Monsieur Imbert, Banquier à Lyon'; he will take care to forward it to, dear madam,

"Your faithful humble servant,

"M. W. M."

And again:—

"I endeavour to amuse myself here with all sorts of monastic employments, the conversation not being at all agreeable to me, and friendship in France as impossible to be attained as orange-trees on the mountains of Scotland; it is not the product of the climate; and I try to content myself with reading, working, walking, and what you'll wonder to hear me mention, building. I know not whether you saw when you were at Avignon the rock of Douse, at the foot of which is the Vice Legate's palace; from the top of which you may see the four provinces of Venaissin, Provence, Languedoc, and Dauphiné; with the distant mountains of Auvergne, and the near meeting of the Durance and Rhone which flow under it; in short, it is the most beautiful land prospect I ever saw. There was anciently a temple of Diana, and another of Hercules of Gaul, whose ruins were turned into a fort, where the powder and ammunition of the town were kept, which was destroyed by lightning about eighty years since. There remained an ancient round tower, which I said in presence of the Consul I would make a very agreeable Belvidere if it was mine. I expected no consequence from this accidental speech of mine; but he proposed to the Hotel de Ville, the next day, making me a present of it; which was done *nemine contradicente*. Partly to show myself sensible of that civility, and partly for my own amusement, I have fitted up a little pavilion, which Lord Burlington would call a temple; being in the figure of the Rotunda; where I keep my books and generally pass all my evenings. If the winds were faithful messengers, they would bring you from thence many sighs and good wishes. I have few correspondents in England, and you that have lived abroad know the common phrases that are made use of; 'As I suppose you know every thing that passes here; or, 'Here is nothing worth troubling you with;' this is all the intelligence I receive. You may judge then how much I think myself obliged to you, dear madam, when you tell me what passes amongst you. I am so ignorant, I cannot even guess at the improper marriages you mention. If it is Lady Mary Grey that has disposed of herself in so dirty a manner, I think her a more proper piece of furniture for a parsonage-house than a palace; and 'tis possible she may have been the original product of a chaplain."

The letters to Sir James and Lady F. Stewart are in Lady Mary's pleasantest tone. But we must for the present content ourselves with a single extract. We postpone what we have to say of the noble editor's merits and demerits, and of the poetical productions of his "ancestors," until another number, as we have consumed the space which we allotted to this work in the columns of this week's journal. How light, how agreeable, how *Walpole-ish* is the following!—

"Lady Fanny has but a slight touch of this disorder [hysterics]: read Dr. Sydenham, you will find the analyses of that and many other diseases,

[†] Lady Huntingdon, the same who afterwards became the head, the Countess Matilda, of the Whitfieldian Methodists.

with a candour I never found in any other author. I confess I never had faith in any other physician, living or dead. Mr. Locke places him in the same rank with Sir Isaac Newton, and the Italians call him the English Hippocrates. I own I am charmed with his taking off the reproach which you men so saucily throw on our sex, as if we alone were subject to vapours: he clearly shows that your wise, honourable spleen is the same disorder, and arises from the same cause; but you vile usurpers do not only en-gross learning, power, and authority to yourselves, but will be our superiors even in constitution of mind, and fancy you are incapable of the woman's weakness of fear and tenderness. Ignorance! I could produce such examples—

Show them that man of wit in all your roll
Whom some one woman has not made a fool.

"I beg your pardon for these verses, but I have a right to scribble all that comes at my pen's end, being in high spirits on an occasion more interesting to me than the election of popes or emperors. His present Holiness is not much my acquaintance, but his family have been so since my first arrival at Venice, 1740. His father died only last winter, and was a very agreeable worthy man, killed by a doctor; his mother rather suffered life than enjoyed it after the death of her husband, and was little sensible of the advancement of her son, tho' I believe it made a greater impression on her than appeared, and it may be, hastened her death; which happened a fortnight after his elevation, in the midst of the extraordinary rejoicings at Venice on that occasion. The honours bestowed on his brother, the balls, festivals, &c. are they not written in the daily books called newspapers?

"I resisted all invitations, and am still at Padua, where reading, writing, riding, and walking find me full employment.

"I accept the compliments of the fine young gentleman with the joy of an old woman who does not expect to be taken notice of: pray don't tell him I am an old woman. He shall be my toast from this forward, and (provided he never sees me as long as he lives) I may be his. *A propos* of toasting, upon my honour I have not tasted a drop of punch since we parted; I cannot bear the sight of it; it would recall too tender ideas, and I should be quarrelling with Fortune for our separation, when I ought to thank her divinity for having brought us together. I could tell a long story of princes and potentates, but I am so little versed in state affairs, I will not so much as answer your ensnaring question concerning the Jesuits, which is meddling at once with church and state.

"This letter is of a horrible length, and what is worse (if any worse can be) such a rhapsody of nonsense as may kill poor Lady Fanny, now she is low-spirited, tho' I am persuaded she has good nature enough to be glad to hear I am happy; which I could not be, if I had not a view of seeing my friends so. As to you, sir, I make no excuses; you are bound to have indulgence for me, as for a sister of the quill. I have heard Mr. Addison say he always listened to poets with patience, to keep up the dignity of the fraternity. Let me have an answer as soon as possible. *Si vales, bene est, valeo.*

"P.S.—Do not be offended at the word poet, it slip'd out unawares. I know you scorn it, tho' it has been dignify'd by Lord Sommers, Lord Godolphin, and Dr. Atterbury."

The schoolmaster, and his "marches and countermarches," are much talked of in these educational days; but we would ask, whether any young Lady Mary, born in 1816, could compete as a wit, a woman of the gay world, a correspondent, with this fascinating piece of antiquity, born in 1690! Either our young ladies are born older and unwise, or the young ladies of other centuries were more averse from dulness and old age, than those of the present period. But we really are enforced to think, that the days of the hoop, and the fan, and the farthingale, were favourable to wit, sprightliness, and elegance. It would take an unusual allowance of governesses and tutors, to raise a modern Lady Mary to the eminence on which the captivating *Wortley* stood!

List of New Books.—*Beauties of the Country*, by T. Miller, Author of 'A Day in the Woods,' royal 12mo. 12s. cl.—*Travels in Egypt and Candia*, 2 vols. 8vo. 28s. bds.—*Glenlonely*, 3 vols. post 8vo. 31s. 6d. bds.—*Flittings of Fancy*, by Robert Sullivan, 2 vols. 8vo. 21s. bds.—*Ross's (Rev. J. L.) Lectures on the History of Moses*, 12mo. 6s. cl.—*Gilderdale's (Rev. J. E.) Essay on Natural Religion and Revelation*, post 8vo. 7s. 6d. cl.—*Gleig's Family History of England*, Vol. III. 12mo. 6d. cl.—*Scottish Christian Herald*, Vol. I. royal 8vo. 7s. cl.—*Deville's Lessons in French*, 18mo. 1s. 6d. cl.—*Herschell's Brief Sketch of the Jews*, 4th edit. 8vo. 2s. cl.—*Sandford and Morton Abridged*, by Miss Zornlin, 12mo. 3s. 6d. cl.—*Confirmation of Maria Monk's Disclosures*, by the Rev. J. Slocum, 18mo. 4s. cl.—*Fairland's Studies of the Human Figure*, 2 vols. royal 8vo. 24s. cl.—*Calvert on Suits in Equi*, 8vo. 14s. bds.—*Heath's Gallery of British Engravings*, Vol. II. super royal 8vo. 21s.; columb. 8vo. 24s. 6d. cl.—*Turner's Rivers of France*, super royal 8vo. 24s.; columb. 8vo. 31s. cl.—*Indwood's Tables*, 8vo. new edit. 7s. bds.—*The Voluntary System*, by the Rev. S. R. Maitland, 2nd edit. 12mo. 6s. 6d. bds.—*Dickson on the Law of Wills*, new edit. 12mo. 5s. 6d. cl.—*Something New from Aunt Mary*, new edit. 18mo. 1s. cl.—*The Nursery Book*, by Billy Ridgway, 2nd edit. 3s. 6d. cl.—*Burnham's Questions in Courts of Law*, 2nd edit. 12mo. 5s. bds.

OUR WEEKLY GOSSIP ON LITERATURE AND ART.

The following somewhat curious paragraph is copied from the daily papers:—

"The Literary Fund Club dined together, on Wednesday, at the Freemason's Tavern. About twenty members only sat down to dinner, the influenza having sadly diminished the usual number of those who attended. It was stated during the course of the evening, that a reversionary sum of 2000*£* had just fallen to the parent Society; and it was suggested, that this sum might form the nucleus of an appeal to public benevolence for the creation of 'Literary Retreats' for some half dozen (to make a beginning) deserving literary characters, to whom a house, rent free, and a small garden, might prove a happy retirement in their days of sear and yellow leaf. In anticipation of this being carried into effect, two gentlemen present made contingent promises of contributions to form an indispensable appendage—a library."

We should have allowed this paragraph to have passed without comment, but that, unfortunately, it is so worded as to create a belief that the Literary Fund Club and the Literary Fund Society are, in some way or other, closely connected, if not identical. Now, there is no more connexion between them than between the Society and the Garrick or the Travellers'. The Literary Fund Club, indeed—and hence we presume the reference to "the parent"—originated in the circumstance that many members of the Committee of the Society were accustomed to dine together at a neighbouring tavern after the business, for transacting which they had assembled, was over. Friends, naturally enough, soon joined the party, and the associated body assumed the name of the Literary Fund Club. The Club, however, did not prosper: some members died, others withdrew, and it was in the last stage of "pinching atrophy," when it was resolved to make some bold efforts to reanimate it, among which, we presume, must be included the late scattering of paragraphs. The attempt, it appears, has not been altogether unsuccessful, as on this occasion "twenty members only" sat down to dinner, the influenza having sadly diminished the usual number"—whereas we have reason to know that twelve months since the Club itself did not consist of twenty members. It must also be distinctly understood, that some members of the Committee of the Society never would, on principle, belong to the Club; being of opinion, that the associating, even in name, an eating and drinking club with a benevolent institution, was likely, the moment it was raised abroad, to create a mischievous prejudice against the latter. We think it necessary to be thus explicit, for certainly the facts seem scarcely credible, now that these clubbists have taken leave to make "suggestions" as to the appropriation of the funds of the Institution; and are, seemingly, so sure of their being carried into effect, as to announce them with their "contingent remainders" to the public. Can it be necessary to add, that no such absurd proposition has ever been mooted by the Committee of the Society? and it is not likely that it ever will be. We doubt, indeed, whether, if such a resolution were carried, "half a dozen" men of "*learning and genius*" (so runs the charter of the Literary Fund,) could be found in all England who would consent to be torn from their families and friends, and old associates and old associations—consent to be ticketed and labelled, and exhibited as paupers, to gratify the admiring sensibilities of our humanitarians. What is there in "*learning and*

genius" worthy of especial admiration and respect, if they do not tend to raise and to ennoble? And is it to be believed that any man "whose life has had some smack of honour in it," would be content to have his sufferings and his sorrows blazoned abroad, and himself to stand a mark for the pitying contempt of the world to point its finger at, for a wretched pittance, and a "Literary Retreat"? No: if misery and misfortune had so persecuted and afflicted him that not a hope remained, he would "pray God to cancel his bond of life," and rather try to hide himself in the huddle of a parish workhouse. It is too true, we fear, that many of those who are relieved by the Society would, for an additional five pounds, consent to have their names placarded at Charing Cross; and we very much doubt whether the literary world would be a jot the wiser if they were; but, should the proposed project be adopted, the favoured parties must be known, and we have great doubts whether it would be pleasant to the Committee to march through Coventry at the head even of this select body.

We learn from the American papers, that the Patent Office, with its curious models and papers, comprising all the inventions of American ingenuity for half a century, has been destroyed by fire! "It is a curious coincidence," says the American editor, "that only the week before, the President, in his Message to Congress, recommended the construction of a fire-proof building for the Treasury Department; doubtless it will now be carried into effect." Doubtless it will! In England it has been urged, over and over again, on the attention of parliament, that our own most precious national records are many of them perishing from neglect; are utterly useless for all historical purposes from the want of order and arrangement; that hundreds have been stolen, thousands destroyed, and bushels of vellum and parchment sold to the glue makers; that all are exposed to the chance of destruction from fire,—and as yet without effect—but "doubtless," as the American observes, if a fire should happen, if they were all destroyed at one fell swoop, a fire-proof Record Office would be built forthwith.

SCIENTIFIC AND LITERARY

ROYAL SOCIETY.

Jan. 19.—Francis Baily, Esq., V.P., in the chair. The following papers were read—viz.

1. 'Researches towards establishing a Theory on the Dispersion of Light, Part. III.' by the Rev. Baden Powell.

2. 'An account of the phenomena of the Helm Wind,' by the Rev. William Walton.

3. 'Meteorological Journal kept at Allenheads, 1400 feet above the level of the Sea, from May 1 to Nov. 1, 1836,' by the Same.

The following gentlemen were elected Fellows:—B. B. Cabbell, C. Holland, M.D., J. U. Rastrick, and S. Solly, Esqs.

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.

Jan. 7.—Sir George Staunton, Bart. V.P., in the chair.—Several donations to the library were laid before the meeting. G. R. Porter, J. Grant Malcolmson, James Malcolmson, and J. Henderson, Esquires, were elected resident members. Ardaseer Cursetjee, Ardaseer Hormajee, Cursetjee Jamsetjee, Aga, Mohamed Rahim, Sherazee, of Bombay; and Chocapah Chetty of Madras, were elected non-resident members of the Society.

A paper by J. M. Dickenson, Esq., of the Bombay Civil Service, on the ancient history of Assyria, as connected with the destruction of the kingdom of Israel, was read. The writer endeavours to reconcile the apparent discrepancies found in the Greek, Persian, and Hebrew accounts of Assyria, by a process of reasoning which it is impossible to abridge; the result of which is, that the Median Sovereigns mentioned by Herodotus and Ctesias form, in fact, two separate dynasties: that of Ctesias being the one which had possession of the throne of Western Asia, and was Median in name only, being founded by Arbaces the Mede; that of Herodotus, on the other hand, was a dynasty of revolted Medes, who under Cyaxares obtained the supremacy, and expelled the more ancient dynasty of Ctesias. This will account for the agreement of the last two reigns in both authors; as

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the accession of the revolted dynasty to the supreme throne gave it a place in the legitimate list furnished by Ctesias.

This difficulty once conquered, the other accounts are more easily reconciled; though, from the loose chronology of orientals, much exactness is not to be expected. A striking conformity is however shown to exist in the period assigned by the Greeks to the establishment of the Assyrian empire under Ninos, with that of the Paishdadian dynasty of Ferdus; and this is in perfect accordance with the era of the division of the earth in the time of Peleg, as deduced from the accounts of Scripture.

The remainder of the paper, which treats of the location of the ten tribes of Israel, when carried into captivity, was reserved for another meeting.

GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

Jan. 18.—Mr. Lyell, President, in the chair. Several communications were read:—

1. An account by Mr. Bowerbank of a deposit, containing recent land shells at Gore Cliff, in the Isle of Wight. The cliff consists of the upper green sand capped with chalk marl, on which rests the bed containing the recent shells. It consists of detritus of chalk and chalk marl, ten feet thick, and ranges to the foot of St. Catherine's Down, a distance of about 660 yards. The shells are dispersed through every part of the bed, and belong entirely to well-known recent species. Similar deposits were observed by Mr. Bowerbank, near St. Lawrence, and between Ventnor and Bonchurch.

2. A letter from Mr. Wyatt to Dr. Buckland, on a trap dyke in the Penrhyn slate quarries near Bangor. A few months since, in carrying on the highest opening in the quarry, the men came suddenly in contact with trap. The width of the dyke is 11 feet; its direction apparently between W.N.W. and N.W., and it intersects the strata nearly at right angles. The slate immediately in contact with it is in some parts highly indurated, having lost its fissile character; and the colour is changed from purple to black; but at the distance of two or three feet from the dyke, the slate recovers its usual colour and fissile structure.

3. A notice, by Mr. Richardson, of a successful boring for water, at Mortlake, in Surrey. The point at which this undertaking was commenced is within 100 feet of the Thames, and on the property of Mr. John Randell. In the first instance, an auger seven inches in diameter was used in penetrating twenty feet of superficial detritus, and 200 feet of London clay. An iron tube eight inches in diameter was then driven into the opening to dam out the land springs, and the percolation from the river. A four-inch auger was next introduced through the iron tube, and the boring was continued, until the clay having been perforated to the depth of 240 feet, the sands of the plastic clay were reached, and water of the softest and purest nature was obtained; but the supply was not sufficient, and it did not reach the surface. The work was proceeded with accordingly, and after fifty-five feet of alternating beds of sand and clay had been penetrated, the chalk was touched upon. A second tube, four and a half inches in diameter, was then driven into the chalk to stop out the water of the plastic sands, and through this tube an auger three and a half inches in diameter was introduced, and worked through thirty-five feet of hard chalk abounding with flints. To this succeeded a bed of soft chalk, into which the instrument suddenly penetrated to the depth of fifteen feet. On the auger being withdrawn, water gradually rose to the surface and overflowed. The expense of the work did not exceed 300*l.* The general summary of the strata penetrated is as follows:—

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Gravel..... | 20 feet. |
| London clay | 240 |
| Plastic sands and clays | 55 |
| Hard chalk with flints | 35 |
| Soft chalk | 15 |
| | 365 |

4. A paper on the strata usually termed Plastic Clay, by Mr. John Morris. After alluding to the description of the Paris Basin, by Cuvier and Brongniart, and to the memoirs of Mr. Webster, Dr. Buckland, Mr. Richardson, and Mr. Rose, on the strata immediately above the chalk in England, the author

proceeded to detail the results of his own observations on the lower portion of the same beds. He divided them into three groups, (a) the oyster beds; (b) the Woolwich and Upnor strata; and (c) the lower arenaceous beds of the London clay.

(a).—The oyster beds, well known at Reading, rest upon the chalk, and consist of green or grey sands, containing great abundance of a large species of oyster. The localities at which they have been examined by Mr. Morris, are Hertford, Northam, and Hadleigh.

(b).—The Woolwich and Upnor strata consist chiefly of clay, sand, pebbles, and a calcareous rock; and are distinguished by containing freshwater, estuary, and marine shells. In the local distribution of these remains, the author has noticed considerable differences; thus, at the Woolwich Pitts the greater number of the shells are freshwater or estuary, while at Plumstead, and Upnor, near Rochester, marine remains prevail. The principal localities mentioned in the paper are Woolwich, Sunbridge Park, near Bromley, Chislehurst, Orpington, Beckenham, Sydenham, Counter-Hill, between New Cross and Lewisham, Bexley Heath, Erith Ballast Pit, Green Street, near Stoke, and Upnor. They are said to occur also at Stifford and Plaistow, in Essex. The thickness of the beds varies greatly even within a few yards, and the order of their succession differs in every pit. The following is the section presented by the opening on Bexley Heath:—

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Vegetable mould and gravel | 2 feet. |
| Sand and pebbles | 6 inches. |
| Ferruginous sand | 3 feet. |
| Mottled clay | 2 ditto. |
| Crown clay with shells | 1 foot. |
| Blue, slatey clay, lower part sandy | 2 feet. |
| Loam, with numerous shells | 3 ditto. |
| Ferruginous sand | depth unknown. |

(c).—The lower arenaceous beds of the London clay consist of grey or green sands with calcareous sandstone, and have been long known for containing at Bognor, great abundance of shells which belong to marine genera. The localities mentioned by Mr. Morris are numerous, but those which have produced the greatest number of fossils are Bognor, Herne Bay, Pegwell Bay, Alum Bay, Binfield, Bray Hampstead, (in sinking a well,) and Faversham. He is also of opinion that the sandy limestone of Liancourt, in France, is of the same age.

5. A memoir on the geology of Suffolk, by the Rev. W. B. Clarke, was commenced. The portions which were read, described the physical features, the drainage of the county, the chalk and the plastic clay. As we shall have occasion to notice this memoir, when the remainder has been read, we shall defer, till then, our analysis of the part brought forward on Wednesday evening.

ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

Jan. 10.—W. B. Scott, Esq. in the chair.—Mr. Reid described several Mammalia, which were on the table, forming part of an extensive collection in Natural History, presented to the Society by Mr. Darwin, who accompanied the surveying ship *Beagle*, in the capacity of naturalist to the expedition. The whole contains upwards of 80 varieties, whilst the birds consist of nearly 450 specimens, including about 150 species, eleven of which from the Galapagos Islands, were described by Mr. Gould, as being of entirely new forms to this country. The same gentleman also described two species of Quails from New South Wales, where at least five varieties are known, as also two species of *Hæmapodii*. Mr. Yarrell read a communication from Mr. George Bennett, on the luminosity and phosphorescence of the Sea, the writer giving it as his opinion, that this phenomenon is produced alike by Molluscs and other animals, as by a highly charged electrical state of the water.

HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY.

Jan. 17.—Notwithstanding the remarkably unfavourable nature of the day for viewing horticultural productions, a collection of very beautiful plants was on the tables at the above meeting, and the merits of the following were sufficiently obvious to obtain the award of Knightian Medals to their owners: viz. the *Renanthera coccinea*, from Mr. S. F. Phelps, the *Epcaris impressa*, from Mrs. Lawrence, and the double *Primula Sinensis*, from Mr.

J. Henderson. We noticed also fine specimens of *Echeveria gibbiflora* and *Garrya elliptica*.

The Earl O'Neill was elected a Fellow of the Society.

MEDICO-BOTANICAL SOCIETY.—*Jan. 11.*—Henry Cope, Esq., Treasurer, in the chair.—A communication was read from Dr. Hancock, on the *Courevallia* or *Conopia*, native remedy of British Guiana, held in considerable repute by the natives, who make use of it internally in the form of decoction, and also as an external application in cases of dropsy, by wrapping the body or the limbs of the patient in the leaves. The writer particularly drew attention to the latter fact, on the ground, that in all probability analogous remedies might be found in our own country.

Jan. 16.—H. Gibbs, Esq. in the chair.—The annual election of Officers and Council took place.

BOTANICAL SOCIETY.—*Jan. 19.*—W. H. White, Esq., in the chair.—A paper was read from Dr. Macintyre, F.L.S., being the continuation of his paper on the plants found about Warley Common, Essex. It appeared from the above paper, that the following ferns are found in that district:—*Aspidium flexifemina*, *Aspidium dilatatum*, *Aspidium angulare*, *Aspidium libatum*, *Aspidium trichomanes* (sparingly), and *Asplenium adiantum-nigrum*; and Dr. Macintyre stated that he, in conjunction with a friend, found 205 species of plants in one day in the neighbourhood of Warley Common.

INSTITUTE OF BRITISH ARCHITECTS.—*Jan. 16.*—P. F. Robinson, Esq. in the chair.—Mr. G. F. Taylor explained the nature of the construction of the roofs, now in use over some of the Admiralty Docks and Building Slips, and presented to the Institute one of the models used in illustration of his paper.—Mr. George Godwin read a paper on the means employed at Paris, for erecting the Obelisk of Luxor, and also made some remarks on the object and decorations of Obelisks in general, the latter being illustrated with casts and drawings. Amongst the former was a cast in plaster of the upper portion of the shaft of the fallen Obelisk at Carnac, taken by J. Bonomi, Esq., along with several other portions of the column, on the spot; also a model in stone of the complete obelisk, and carved with a resemblance of the hieroglyphics contained thereon. Mr. J. L. Donaldson, the Secretary, also read a memorandum, translated from a letter from M. Guenapin, Honorary and Corresponding Member, respecting the edifices at Paris, completed in the year 1836, as also those now in progress.

MEETINGS FOR THE ENSUING WEEK.

| | | |
|-------|--|-------------|
| SAT. | { Asiatic Society | Two P.M. |
| | Westminster Medical Society | Eight. |
| MON. | { Geographical Society | Nine. |
| | { Entomological Society (<i>Anniversary</i>) | Eight. |
| TUES. | { Medical and Chirurg. Society | 1 p. Eight. |
| | Architectural Society | Eight. |
| | Civil Engineers | Eight. |
| | Zoological Soc. (<i>Scientific Business</i>) | P. Eight. |
| WED. | { Medicinal Botanical Society | Eight. |
| | Society of Arts | Eight. |
| | Royal Society | 1 p. Eight. |
| THUR. | Royal Society of Literature | Four. |
| | Society of Antiquaries | Eight. |
| FRI. | Royal Institution | 1 p. Eight. |

MUSIC AND THE DRAMA.

DRURY LANE.
This Evening, *CINDERELLA*; and *THE PANTOMIME*. Monday, No Performance.
TUESDAY. *THE SIEGE OF ROCHELLE*; with *THE DEVIL WITH RIQUET WITH THE TUFT*, in which Madame Vestris, Wednesday, *CINDERELLA*; and *THE PANTOMIME*.

OLYMPIC.
This Evening, *COURT FAVOUR*; or, *Private and Confidential*, in which Madame Vestris and Mr. C. Mathews will appear; after which HE WOULD BE AN ACTOR, (Astley, Mr. C. Mathews, *Dicky Darling*, Mr. Oxberry); to conclude with *RIQUET WITH THE TUFT*, in which Madame Vestris, Mr. C. Mathews, and Mrs. Honey will appear.

VOCAL CONCERTS.—Under the immediate Patronage of H. R. H. the Duchess of Kent.—**THE SECOND CONCERT** will be at the Hanover Square Rooms on MONDAY EVENING NEXT, the 23rd instant, when will be performed a SELECTION OF CLASSICAL MUSIC, English and Foreign, comprising Scenes from the Operas of *Euryanthe*, *Oberon*, and *Jesu, Queen of Sheba*; *La Muette de Portici*; *Der Freischütz*; *Gianni Schicchi*; *Il Trovatore*; *Don Carlos*; *Die Zauberflöte*; *La Gioconda*; *La Sonnambula*; and *Madame Butterfly*. Ladies and Gentlemen desirous of attending a Single Concert, are respectfully informed that Tickets, Half-a-Guinea each, may be had of the Members of the Vocal Society.

EDWARD TAYLOR, Sec.

MISCELLANEA

Literature and Art.—Bent's List of New Books and Engravings for 1836, exhibits a decrease of New Publications last year, the Number of Books amounting to 1250, (1500 Volumes,) exclusive of New Editions, Pamphlets, or Periodicals, being 150 less than in 1835. The Number of Engravings is 98 (including 40 Portraits,) 17 of which are engraved in the Line manner, 66 in Mezzotinto, and 15 in Chalk, Aquatinta, &c.

Rev. J. Berington.—The subject of the following letter does not appear to us of the slightest consequence, but we are willing to humour our correspondent.

To the Editor of the *Athenæum*.

Sir.—In your reference to 'A Literary History of the Middle Ages,' by the Rev. Joseph Berington, you say of its author, that he was a Roman Catholic missionary, residing in the vicinity of Manchester. The truth is, that Mr. Berington was a Roman Catholic priest. In the exercise of his duties he passed the early part of his life at Oscott, near Birmingham; and whilst residing there, published his two histories, of Abbeville and Heloise; and of the Reign of Henry II., and his sons Richard I. and John. On his removal from Oscott, he became the chaplain of the late Sir John Throckmorton, and resided in Berkshire, near the seat of that gentleman. Whilst living there he published his 'Literary History.' I am persuaded that he never lived near Manchester, nor was directly connected with the Roman Catholic establishment in that vicinity. Errors of this kind are of themselves of little consequence; but trifling errors may sometimes, from their implication with important matters, occasion serious evils. They ought not therefore to remain unheeded or uncorrected. With this apology for intruding on your attention, I remain, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

January 16, 1837.

W. L.

Construction of Railways.—Mr. Thomas Parkin has forwarded to us a letter on this subject, from which the following are such extracts as appear likely to interest the public:—

"Mr. Vignoles, Civil-Engineer, has published a plan for making the Upper Works of Railways; by adopting which he proposes to save, in two trackways, from 800*t.* to 2200*t.* per mile. He might have said much more.—Mr. Vignoles's plan is to use *fir* planks, 9 inches wide, and 4*ft* thick, bedded on ballast, which is loose gravel, as a *continuous* support of his frame-work, on which are mounted rails, at the top resembling the rails at present in use, though their base is 5 inches, and they weigh 48*lb.* per yard.—Mr. Vignoles intends to hold together the two longitudinal bearers for each trackway by wooden girders, at a short distance apart, so that the whole will form a frame, something like a huge ladder; and to secure the rails to the frame-work by nails or spikes; and if wrought-iron nails are used, each trackway (that is, two rails for a carriage to run on,) will, according to his estimate, cost 22*s.* per yard, or 11*s.* for a single line of rail.—Whether loose stones will constitute a continuous, solid foundation, especially on clay and other soft earth, and whether any dependence can be placed on the stability of the frame-work, that is, its continuing an absolute fixture, considering the nature of the trial to which it will be subjected, I must leave the public to judge, entertaining the opinion, that a decided preference will be given to bearers *buried in and consolidated with a bed of concrete*; two feet or more wide and deep, and which, for solidity, strength, and durability, will resemble a continuous rock, the whole length of the road.—Then, the species of wood to be employed for bearers. Mr. Vignoles is for *fir*, which, after being *kyanized*, he supposes will last seven years; but I am for *oak*, which, after undergoing the same process, will last seven times seven years; and during this period no interruption will occur to the traffic, by taking up old bearers and putting down new ones. Again, Mr. Vignoles will secure (that is, if wet, dry, and bad weather permit,) the rails to *fir* bearers by *nails*; but *screws* in *oak* bearers render my plan independent of the influence of the weather.—Now, as to price: Mr. Vignoles's plan costs 11*s.* per yard; but I have made known that the maximum price of mine will be 10*s.*, though in many, perhaps in most parts of the country, the price will not exceed 8*s.* per yard, even if it does 7*s.* Mr. Vignoles's iron rail costs 5*s.* 7*d.* per yard, but mine only 1*s.*, and where he uses four feet of *fir* I use only one of *oak*. He has no means for the bars to expand and contract, but upon my plan this advantage is enjoyed."

Bones of the Ear in Cetaceæ.—It is by the bones of the ear, that M. Vanbeneden proposes to determine the larger species of Cetaceæ. The sub-genus, Rorqual, for instance, is well characterized, and was not known to go so far to the north of the Mediterranean as Iceland, till MM. Quoy and Gaimard brought one of the bones of the ear from thence. This character he thinks will be of great use in fossil geology.

Spots on Marble.—Housekeepers may perhaps like to know that all the red spots which are to be found in marble, are not ineffectual. Those proceeding from iron always remain, but those which are caused by a vegetable substance, or cryptogamous plant, may be removed by a camel-hair pencil, and a little water. They are often to be seen in the marble of Saravezza, and are identical with those fungi which impart the red colour to snow.

Dramatic Novelties in Paris.—During the year 1834, 188 new pieces were produced at the Parisian theatres, 127 of which were vaudevilles, and in which the labour of 148 authors were united. In 1835, 221 novelties were brought out, of which 159 were vaudevilles, and comprising the labour of 183 authors, being an increase of 43 pieces and 35 authors. The following statement will show that the increase was much greater in 1836. At the Académie Royale, there were produced 4 novelties (2 operas and 2 ballets); at the Théâtre Français, 7 novelties (2 tragedies and 5 comedies); at the Opéra Comique, 12; at the Théâtre Italien, 1; at the Odéon, 3; the Gymnase, 17; Vaudeville, 22; Variétés, 25; Palais Royal, 28; Gaîté, 32; Ambigu Comique, 27; Porte Saint Martin, 12; Cirque Olympique, 4; Théâtre Choiseul, 14; Folies Dramatiques, 14; Panthéon, 40; Saint Antoine, 34. Total, 296, comprising 218 vaudevilles.

Luminous Appearance at Sea off the Shetland Isles.

—A curious luminous appearance at sea is mentioned in the following abstract from a letter to Robert Stevenson, Esq. Engineer, by the Light-house Keeper on Sumburgh Head in Shetland: "Monday, Sept. 19, 1836.—The herring-boats went out through the night—there came on a severe gale from the north-east, which drove them from their nets, and scarcely any of them got into their own harbours. Mr. Hay's fishermen lost 180 nets, Mr. Bruce of Whalsay lost 114 nets, and a great many of the poor men lost the whole of their nets. The fishermen also informed me, that upon the same night, there appeared to them a light which greatly annoyed them. It appeared like a furnace standing in the water, and the beams of the light stood to a great height. It became fainter on the approach of day, and at length vanished away by day-light. It continued for two nights. It stood so near some of the boats that the men thought of cutting from their lines to get out of its way."—*Jameson's Journal.*

Mode of preventing Beer from becoming acid.—A patent has been taken out in America, for preserving beer from becoming acid in hot weather, or between the temperatures of 74° and 94°. To every 174 gallons of liquor, the patentee Mr. Storewell directs the use of one pound of raisins, in the following manner:—"Put the raisins into a linen or cotton bag, and then put the bag containing the raisins into the liquor before fermentation; the liquor may then be let down at 65° or as high as 70°. The bag containing the raisins must remain in the vat until the process of fermentation has so far advanced as to produce a white appearance or scum all over the surface of the liquor, which will probably take place in about twenty-four hours. The bag containing the raisins must then be taken out, and the liquor left until fermentation ceases. The degree of heat in the place where the working vat is situated, should not exceed 66° nor be less than 60°." To prevent *distillers' wash* from becoming acid, two pounds of raisins should be put into 150 gallons of the wash, the raisins being chopped and put in without a bag, and 106 of hops should be put into the vat wash for every eight bushels of malt at the time of washing, and 3*lb.* of pound of hops for every bushel of malt brewed, to be boiled in on the liquor in the copper.—*Journal of the Franklin Institute.*

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We were somewhat startled on Saturday week by reading in the *Literary Gazette* a long letter from Sir John Herschel to Sir W. Hamilton, published as an original communication—at least, without explanatory note or comment, although copied verbatim from the *Athenæum* of the 3rd of September. We did not advert to the circumstance, conceiving that a hint would certainly be given by some friend, from whom it might be more graciously received; but, as no notice was taken of it last week, we do so now, to put the editor on his guard against the person who sent it to him.

In consequence of the facilities now afforded for the transmission of English journals to the Continent, we propose hereafter to forward the *STAMPED ATHENÆUM* direct from the London Office. Subscriptions, for not less than Three Months, will be received, as heretofore, by M. Baudry, 9, Rue du Coq-St-Honoré, Paris; and by our Publisher, at 2, Catherine-street, Strand, after the following rate, regulated by the Post Office charges:—

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H. J. ROSE, B.D. Principal.

KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON.—MEDICAL SCHOOL, 1836-1837. The SPRING SESSION will commence THIS DAY, the 24th, in DESCRIPTIVE and SURGICAL ANATOMY—Richard Partridge, Esq., Vis. Surgeon to the Charing-cross Hospital. PHYSIOLOGY, GENERAL and MORBID ANATOMY—R. B. Todd, M.D. PHYSIOMYCOLOGY—J. F. Daniell, Esq., F.R.S. MEDICINE, the Principles and Practice of—Thomas Walker, M.D., Physician to the Middlesex Hospital. PHYSIOPRACTICE, the Principles and Practice of—J. M. Armer, Esq., Surgeon to the Middlesex Hospital. MIDWIFERY and the DISEASES of WOMEN and CHILDREN—Robert Ferguson, M.D., Physician to the Westminster Living Hospital. FORENSIC MEDICINE—I. F. Ferguson, M.D. COMPARATIVE ANATOMY—I. F. Ferguson, M.D. The Demonstrator of Anatomy, Mr. H. Latter, will attend in the Dissecting Rooms during the whole of the day. During the Summer, Courses of Lectures will be delivered on PHYSIOPRACTICE, FORENSIC MEDICINE, and NATURAL PHILOSOPHY, as well as MEDICAL DEMONSTRATIONS of the OPERATIONS of SURGERY. Jan. 19, 1837.

HUGH J. ROSE, B.D. Principal.

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